THE REIGN OF DEATH.

A POEM.

Occaſioned by the DECEASE of the Rev. JAMES HARTLEY, late of HAWORTH.

By JOHN FAWCETT.

WITH

A FUNERAL SERMON,

On the ſame Occaſion.

By WILLIAM CRABTREE.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

The Reign of Death.

PART FIRST.

The Nature and Extent of Death's Dominion.

AMIDST the gloomy darkneſs of the night,
While the dim taper ſheds her feeble light,
Sweet ſolitude, I ſeek thy lov'd receſs,
To vent thoſe griefs, which mortals can't redreſs.
Creation now in mourning weeds appears;
In pearly dews ſhe ſheds a thouſand tears;
And, wrap'd in ſhades, laments the abſent day,
Depriv'd of all her joy, the ſolar ray.
Thick darkneſs, now, her awful rule maintains;
And ſilence, univerſal ſilence reigns.
No grazing herds upon the mountains low;
Huſht is the ſprightly muſic of the bough;
Sweet *Philomel*, alone, her note prolongs,
To chear the night with her unrivall'd ſongs.

In lawleſs banquets and unchaſte delights,
The ſons of *Belial* join to ſpend their nights;
Black horrid oaths and blaſphemies abound;
And jeſts obſcene pollute the air around;
The ſick'ning moon indignant wears a ſhrowd,
Or hides her ſilver light behind a cloud:
The conſtellations tremble from afar,
And fierce reſentment burns in ev'ry ſtar.

Some revel at the lawleſs maſquerade,
And all the rites of houſhold peace invade,
Some throng the ball, and ſome at cards or dice
Profane the night, by ev'ry hateful vice.
Some crowd the tavern, ſome the theatre,
And ſome the public coffee-houſe prefer;
Where politicians ſit, in cloſe debate,
Propoſing plans to ſave the ſinking ſtate.

Nocturnal revels ſtupify the ſoul;
And death is in th' intoxicating bowl.
Th' inflaming liquor ſets the man on fire,
And into madneſs ſtimulates deſire.
Attending fiends the vileſt thoughts ſuggeſt,
And raiſe a helliſh ferment in the breaſt.
Reaſon is loſt, the brutiſh paſſions reign,
And lead the wretch to everlaſting pain.

But, pleaſing ſolitude, I court thy ſhade,
Thou waſt for reſt or contemplation made.

At dead of night, I hail the ſolemn gloom,
And penſive ſtroll along the ſounding room.
Content, that neither foe nor friend is near,
My ſad complaints and broken ſighs to hear.
If ſome relieving thought my boſom fire,
With eager haſte, I ſtrive to tune the lyre;
And try my faint unſkilful voice to raiſe,
And ſoothe my plaintive ſoul, with ſerious lays.

I count you happy, ſons of ſacred rhyme,
Whoſe weighty words ſtand all the ſhocks of time.
Whoſe flowing verſes ev'ry theme adorn,
To give delight to ages yet unborn:
To aid devotion, in her cloſe receſs,
And lead the ſoul to God and happineſs.

Some nobly tell of ancient conqueſts won,
Or worthy deeds, which mighty chiefs have done.
The learned hear with awe, while *Homer* ſings
The victor's glory, and the pride of Kings.
Virgil's harmonious numbers ſweetly roll;
And *Pope* and *Milton* captivate the ſoul.
But thee, immortal *Young*, I moſt admire,
The nobleſt ardor tunes thy matchleſs lyre.
A humbler province to my muſe belongs,
To mourn the dead in ſad funereal ſongs.
Amongſt the ſhades, ſhe ſtill delights to dwell,
And death's tremendous ſway attempts to tell.

Death reigns by ſin: 'tis curſed ſin, alone,
That rais'd at firſt, and ſtill ſupports his throne.
'Twas ſin, that angels from perfection hurl'd;
And ſin brought death into this guilty world.
He enter'd by the breach that ſin had made;
Sin plac'd the crown imperial on his head.

He for a ſcepter holds a dreadful dart;
Prepar'd to wound the inattentive heart.
A thouſand terrors in his viſage dwell,
Fierce as mount *Ætna*, or the gulf of hell.
Inſatiate hunger preys upon his maw;
Rapacious cruelty is all his law.

Behind him yawns the wide extended tomb,
With this inſcription, "Here is man's long home."
There ſextons digging with inceſſant toil,
Enlarge the ſtore-houſe, for the victor's ſpoil.
Darkneſs and horror overſpread the ground;
The air is fill'd with ev'ry frightful ſound.

Cloſe by his ſide, a formidable train
Of fierce diſeaſes recognize his reign.
There fevers, burning with malignant rage,
Extend their flames, which nothing can aſſuage.
Their lighted torches ſet the world on fire,
And by their force the ſick'ning crowds expire.

Conſumption

Conſumption ſhews her meager viſage there;
Her naked bones thro' the pale ſkin appear.
She ſeems a ſkeleton expos'd to view,
With deep ſunk eyes, and lips of deadly blue.
Slowly ſhe moves; yet, by her waſting hand,
The tyrant death depopulates the land.

There *peſtilence* premeditates her way,
To conquer towns and nations in a day.
There *apoplexy* muſters all her pow'r,
To ſtrike the blow in ſome unguarded hour.
Gout there awaits; and there the tort'ring *ſtone*
In ſecret lurks beneath the victor's throne.
Mad *phrenzy* grins with a diſtracted air;
Black *melancholy* ſinks in deep deſpair.
Ulcer, o'erſpread with ev'ry putrid ſtain;
Convulſion, tortur'd with inteſtine pain.
Swoll'n *dropſy* too, with *aſthma* near ally'd;
And various maladies un-nam'd beſide.

Intemp'rance there prepares the luſcious bane,
By which, ten thouſand victims ſhall be ſlain.
They from her hand will ſnatch th' empoiſon'd bowl,
Which kills the body and deſtroys the ſoul.

Bellona too with blood beſprinkl'd o'er,
And garments, dipt in tides of human gore,
Here ready waits, her implements to weild,
That death may triumph o'er the hoſtile field.

He, thro' her arts, extends his awful ſway,
And thins contending nations in a day.

Theſe are th' attendants of the gloomy king,
Whoſe deadly rule the muſe attempts to ſing.
Theſe crowd his court, in ghaſtly order ſtand,
And wait the awful ſignal of his hand.

Thus armed, death, with univerſal ſway,
Sweeps all the tenants of the globe away;
He ſpares nor age nor ſex, nor great nor ſmall;
So heroes periſh, and proud monarchs fall!

From houſe to houſe, he ſtalks with equal foot;
The prince's palace, and the peaſant's hut,
Are equal in his view; nor does he know
To ſpare the crowned head, or miter'd brow.
He claims his victims, by one gen'ral law,
On downy pillows, or on beds of ſtraw.
He pays no deff'rence to the honor'd name;
The king and beggar are with him the ſame;
Athirſt for blood, with undiſtinguiſh'd rage,
He treats the maſter as his meaneſt page.
Unaw'd by lofty tow'rs, or rooms of ſtate,
Or num'rous guards that round their ſov'reign wait,
With winged ſpeed his killing arrow flies;
The mighty monarch trembles, groans and dies.

His

His wealth and pow'r their maſter could not ſave,
Nor yet procure a reſpite from the grave.
Vain were his gilded roofs, his charming bow'rs,
His gardens, groves and beds of painted flow'rs;
The royal victim yielding to his fate,
Lies breathleſs, tho' in all the pomp of ſtate.

The hero ſtrives to gain a mighty name,
And ſhine reſplendent in the ſphere of fame.
He dreads no danger; nothing ſhall retard
His courſe; ſince glory is his wiſh'd reward.
With rapid ſpeed, he flies in hope's career,
And wild ambition is his charioteer.
As ſoon may Syren-ſongs the ſtorm appeaſe,
Silence the winds, and ſmooth the ruffled ſeas;
As ſoon the wren may drink the ocean dry,
As ſoon a glow-worm lighten all the ſky,
As laſting reſt and ſatisfaction ſpring,
From breath propell'd by fame's unſtable wing.

Perhaps *Honorus*, while he ſtrives to climb,
With haſty ſteps, the pinacle ſublime,
Is blaſted by diſeaſe's killing ſtroke,
And ſees, at once, his airy bubbles broke.
He raves, he groans, laments and pants for breath,
As conſcious of the near approach of death.
A thouſand terrors overwhelm his ſoul,
And o'er his head the threat'ning thunders roll.

Each

Each med'cine, now, diſowns its pow'r to ſave
The deſtin'd victim from the gaping grave.
In vain, the ſons of *Eſculapius* boaſt
Of drugs, collected from a foreign coaſt.
In vain, the fam'd practitioners preſcribe;
The king of terrors ſcorns to take a bribe.
Attending friends, officious, ſtrive in vain,
The ſtruggling, flying ſpirit to retain.
Death ſtops the motion of the throbing heart;
And life retires from ev'ry vital part.
In gloomy miſts, the languid eye-balls roll,
The quiv'ring lips yield up the fleeting ſoul.
Fate intervenes to blaſt his pomp and pride,
And in a pitchy cloud, his glory hide.

Surviving friends the fun'ral rites prepare;
No pains are wanting, no expence they ſpare.
The undertakers all their cares beſtow
To furniſh out the mimicry of wo.
The gloomy hearſe, amidſt the gazing throng,
And train of mourners, ſlowly moves along;
The blazing torches ſolemnize the ſcene,
And each attendant wears a ghaſtly mein.

When heroes die, the grateful nations raiſe,
Hiſtoric monuments to ſpeak their praiſe.
The ſculptur'd ſtones, in lofty numbers, tell.
How this man conquer'd, that in battle fell.

This

This is the laſt, the dying breath of fame;
Funereal pomp is all the great can claim.
Vain oſtentation! impotence of pride!
Yet no diſtinction death allows beſide.
"The moſt renown'd is interred here;
Here lies his grace, or there the noble peer."
This, this is all the flatt'ring ſtone can boaſt;
The ſtone conceals——a heap of ſordid duſt.
In the deep grave the putrid corpſes lie;
No chearing ray ſalutes them from the ſky.

Should ev'ry grace of blooming beauty riſe
In all your form, and ſparkle in your eyes,
Death will not ſpare the well-proportion'd frame,
Leah and *Rachel* are to him the ſame.

Among the crowd, *Florella* lately ſhone,
And vainly fancy'd ev'ry charm her own:
She labour'd much, by ev'ry guileful art,
To pleaſe the eye and captivate the heart.
'Twas all her ſtudy how ſhe might adorn
The piece of clay, for vile corruption born.
The wild extravagance of dreſs ſhe try'd,
And often with the gawdy peacock vy'd;
So empty was her mind, of all but female pride.

A ſcorching fever ſeiz'd the haughty maid,
At once her roſes and her lilies fade.

Then

Then ſhiv'ring, on the verge of death ſhe ſtands,
She groans and cries, and lifts her feeble hands,
"Permit me, yet, a little while, to live!"
Death ſtrikes the blow, and grants her no reprieve.
Yet her gay ſiſters ſtill as vain as ſhe,
Forget, that they, like her, muſt ſhortly die.

Strength nought avails in that important hour;
When death appear'd e'en *Samſon* had no pow'r.
Samſon could bear the two-leav'd gates away;
His preſence fill'd whole armies with diſmay;
He needed not the conq'ring ſword to draw;
A thouſand champions with an aſs's jaw
His mighty arm ſubdu'd; yet from the grave,
E'en *Samſon* had not ſtrength himſelf to ſave.
Mov'd by his touch, the mighty ſtructure falls,
The wide-extended roof, and maſſy walls,
The pride of all the *Philiſtines* he ſlew;
But, death himſelf, he could not ſtill ſubdue.

Here, all the depths of human wiſdom fail;
Learning, with all her ſtores, could ne'er prevail
Againſt the dart of death; e'en *Solomon*,
Whoſe equal was not found beneath the ſun,
Could not eſcape the grizly monſter's pow'r,
Nor overcome in that deciſive hour.
The wiſe and learned, as the fooliſh die,
And in the grave, they both forgotten lie.

Some

Some part with life, before they quit the womb;
Some, from the breaſt, are carry'd to the tomb.
Maternal cares the infants cannot ſave,
They ſoon exchange the cradle for the grave:
And, like the num'rous leaves, which autumn ſheds,
They lie promiſcuous in their clay-cold beds.
One day, indulged with the gift of breath;
The next, infolded in the arms of death.

Some die, before the uſe of ſpeech they know;
Some quit the world, who ſcarce have learnt to go;
Some riſe in youth, and leave the childiſh toy,
Become their parent's hope and only joy;
But death beholds them, with an envious eye,
Blaſts the young blooming twigs, and bids them die.

Some by a ſudden ſtroke are ſnatcht away,
In the full proſpect of the bridal day;
Amidſt the pleaſing dream of nuptial joys,
Death lies in ambuſh, and the bliſs deſtroys.

Some, borne like bubbles, down the tide of time,
Are doom'd to part with life, in all its prime.
'Midſt ſcenes of buſ'neſs, and tumultuous care,
The inſidious fowler lays the fatal ſnare.
The flatt'ring proſpects of extenſive gain,
And growing wealth ſolicit them in vain.
They quit the golden bait; reſign their breath;
And fall a prey to unrelenting death.

The

The careleſs ſinner oft in vain chaſtis'd,
Who, obſtinate in ſin, reproof deſpis'd;
Borne down, from year to year, in folly's ſtream,
Is rouz'd by death, from his bewitching dream.
Thoughtleſs he liv'd, and deſtitute of fear,
But now, he ſees the *king of terrors* near.
Diſeaſe, in all its violence and pow'r,
Attacks his frame, in this alarming hour:
With ſad remorſe and ſecret horror ſtung,
He groans and cries, but with a faltring tongue,
"Wretch, that I am, in ſuch a courſe to run,
By which, I am eternally undone!"

Attending friends the mournful accents hear,
And turn aſide to drop the guſhing tear.
Aghaſt they ſtand, the tragic ſcene they view,
And each reſolves to lead his life anew.
They look again, with ſympathetic grief,
But none can give the dying man relief.

His awful diſſolution now is near,
Deſpair and terror in his looks appear.
Behold him, gaſping in the pangs of death,
With ling'ring agonies, reſign his breath.

A train of dreadful demons ſtand prepar'd
To drag the pris'ner to his juſt reward.

Their

Their baleful eyes, with helliſh fury, glare;
Fell hiſſing ſnakes ſupply the place of hair;
Each fiend, for breath, a fi'rey vapour draws,
Their hands and feet are arm'd with harpy's claws.
Th' affrighted ſoul is with a diſmal yell,
Chas'd headlong, downwards, to th' abyſs of hell.
Hoarſe cries are heard, and hopeleſs ſhrieks abound,
And long the trembling air retains the ſound.

In realms of endleſs darkneſs and deſpair,
Where none but fiends and damned ſpirits are;
In gulphs of execration and of wo,
He learns, the fruits of curſed ſin, to know.

PART

PART SECOND.

Philander's Death.

EXTENSIVE uſefulneſs will not ſecure
The waſting life of man; or yet procure
A prolongation of its feeble thread;
Philander,* too, is number'd with the dead.

In active life, the dear *Philander* ſhone;
His neighbour's cares and griefs he made his own.
What proofs, he gave, of piety and zeal!
How much, he labour'd for his country's weal!
Anxious, that commerce, once again, might ſmile,
And peace and plenty crown our native iſle.
With warm affections glowing in his breaſt,
He fed the poor, and ſuccour'd the diſtreſt.
The pious widow did his bounty ſhare,
The helpleſs orphan witneſſed his care.
Virtue adorn'd his ſoul; with ſteady aim
He ſought to glorify his Saviour's name.

But

* Mr *Adam Holden*, late of *Halifax*.

But what is life? a vain fantaſtic dream!
A ſleeping frenzy's tranſitory ſcheme!
A flying ſhadow, an uncertain breath,
A meteor, ſoon enwrap'd in ſhades of death.
'Tis as the miſt which morning-beams exhale,
Or like a pleaſing melancholy tale.
'Tis like the graſs, or the more fading flow'r,
Cut down by death, and wither'd in an hour.
Midſt ſcenes of buſ'neſs and domeſtic cares,
Death's hand unſeen the fatal ſhaft prepares.
A fierce diſeaſe *Philander*'s life aſſails,
Baffles the healing art; and ſtill prevails
O'er all the efforts learn'd phyſicians try;
Their drugs are vain; they ſee *Philander* die.
His God ſuſtain'd him, in that gloomy hour,
When all created comforts loſe their pow'r:
When nature faints and death's impending ſhade,
In awful darkneſs hovers round the bed.

The conflict ends; the dear *Philander* dies!
Cleaving the air, the ſpirit upward flies,
And darts like lightning thro' the ſhining ſkies,
As late *Eumenio* fled,* *Philander* goes,
To the bleſt realms of undiſturb'd repoſe.
Now ſafely landed, on the bliſsful ſhore,
Earth's diſappointments ne'er ſhall vex him more.

* See my Death of *Eumenio*, price 6d. ſold by *Vallance*, Cheapſide, London.

Far from the reach of ev'ry hurtful ſnare,
From noiſy tumult and diſtracting care.
Victorious, o'er the king of dread he lives,
And the bright crown of endleſs joy receives.

But who can dear *Sophronia*'s woes relate!
Muſe, ſtop a while, to mourn her widow'd ſtate.
Her blaſted hopes, her earthly comforts fled,
Her *good*, her *kind*, her *own Philander* dead.

If here ſome tranſient hour of joy we feel,
'Tis but the prelude to ſome threat'ning ill.
Diſtreſs is near, when we poſſeſs delight,
The ſhort-liv'd day precedes a tedious night.

So in a ſudden calm the billows ſleep,
Smooth is the ſurface of the gloomy deep;
The treach'rous winds, their gath'ring breath, deny
Preſaging ſome deſtructive tempeſt nigh.

Young *Joſeph* once his aged father chear'd;
How happy, then, the Patriarch appear'd.
His ſoul was fill'd with ſympathetic joy,
While in his arms, he claſpt the ſmiling boy.
But ſoon, the darling from his heart is torn,
And *Jacob* lives in plaintive ſtrains to mourn,
His *Joſeph* gone; in whom his life was bound,
Wide was the breach, and laſting was the wound.

Yet

Yet providence, for ever good and wiſe,
Conceals our future troubles, from our eyes:
Why ſhould we then ridiculouſly mourn,
In view of future griefs as yet unborn?
Now breaks the ſtorm o'er dear *Sophronia*'s head
She ſees it ſtrike the kind *Philander* dead.

A ſolemn ſadneſs in her looks appears,
Beyond the ſoft relief of flowing tears.
Her gloomy thoughts no juſt expreſſions find,
To paint the deep affliction of her mind.
What pleas of reaſon can the force controul
Of that diſtreſs which overwhelms her ſoul?
Her ſpirits droop, her head with grief oppreſt,
Dejected ſinks upon her penſive breaſt.

In ſome dark hour, me thinks I hear her ſay,
"Why do I live to ſee this trying day?
Why do I live, of earthly joy bereft;
My other half is gone, and I am left
Diſconſolate, afflicted and forlorn,
With five dear orphans, and a ſixth unborn!

Philander's tender love I ſtill review;
And recollection wounds my ſoul anew:
The future proſpect darker ſtill appears,
And unbelief ſuggeſts a thouſand fears.

Maternal cares and gloomy thoughts ariſe,
And paint the joyleſs ſcene before my eyes.
This ſtroke doth all my earthly hopes confound,
My grief is great; incurable my wound.

Ye mourning doves, your own complaints forbear;
To my diſtreſſes lend a liſt'ning ear.
Ye pitying echoes, in the hollow vale,
Be ye reſponſive to my plaintive tale,
Ye lofty pines and beeches, as ye grow,
Witneſs the ſad expreſſions of my wo.

But ah! I hear the all-commanding word,
Be ſtill and know I am thy ſov'reign Lord.
I will, to all thy humble cries, attend,
And be, thro' life, thy never-failing friend,
Truſt in my grace, thyſelf and babes ſhall ſhare,
In me, a huſband's, and a father's care.

May he my weaker paſſions all compoſe;
'Tis right, 'tis beſt, whate'er my Maker does.
Be thou, my ſoul, to all his will reſign'd;
He is too wiſe to err, too good to be unkind."

'Tis juſt, *Sophronia*, let your faith rely
E'en on that hand, that bids your comforts die.
Believe his ſov'reign right to all you have;
Whate'er he takes, he takes but what he gave.

At

At his command, the dreadful tempeſts riſe,
With rapid ſpeed, the ſtorm obedient flies;
Th' etherial vault is rent from pole to pole,
Red lightnings glare, and vengeful thunders roll;
While, conſcious terrors ſeize the guilty ſoul.
The bluſtring winds, o'er the rough mountains blow,
And mighty torrents ſwell the brook below.
Rouz'd by the ſtorm, the troubl'd oceans roar,
The foaming billows breaking on the ſhore.
Conflicting waves, with awful fury riſe,
And in wild tumults, mingle ſeas and ſkies.
With ceaſeleſs noiſe, the awful deeps reſound;
The ſhelving rocks repeat the thrilling ſound.
The ſhatter'd bark now floats upon the wave,
And inſtant ſinks in the deep watry grave.

So, in the ſtorms of adverſe life, we find
The gath'ring tempeſt *cloſe* upon the mind,
Thick clouds and darkneſs intercept the ſkies;
Deſponding fears and gloomy thoughts ariſe.
The waves of trouble ſwell and break our peace,
And death is threatned by the angry ſeas.
A penſive ſadneſs dwells within the breaſt,
And none, but God, can bring the heart to reſt.

His ſmile, divine, can ev'ry fear controul,
And, with immortal pleaſure, fill the ſoul.

His gracious preſence drives the gloom away,
And turns the darkneſs into chearing day.
So, when the riſing ſun the mountain gilds
Dull night, to him, his tranſient empire yields;
To diſtant realms, he takes his haſty flight,
And nature welcomes the returning light.

Religion is no vain fantaſtic thing;
From this, alone, ſubſtantial pleaſures ſpring.
Its comforts ſoften each corroding care,
And turn the deſert to an *Eden* fair;
Revive the heart, when earthly joy is fled,
And eaſe the pains, that wait a dying bed.

Whilſt you, *Sophronia*, with maternal cares,
Watch o'er your babes, and nurſe their infant years;
May providence your ev'ry want ſupply,
And keep your orphans with a father's eye.
May angel-guardians all your ſteps attend;
And JESUS be your everlaſting friend.

Let not your ſoul be ſunk in ſad deſpair;
Still hope in God, and to his throne repair:
Omnipotence will ne'er the ſuit deny
Of humble ſouls, who on his grace rely.

When *Jacob*'s ſon purſu'd the dang'rous road
Appointed by their great deliv'rer, God,

The

The cloudy pillar led the hoſt by day,
At night, it chear'd them with a lightſome ray.

So truſt, my friend, for heav'nly guidance too,
To light your gloomy path the deſert thro'.
The chearing beams of ſov'reign grace ſhall ſhine,
And lead you, in the path of peace divine;
Point out a ſolid baſis for your hope;
Exalt your views and keep your courage up.
The ſtormy voy'ge of life ſhall but be ſhort,
You, ſoon, ſhall reach the much-deſir'd port.
Philander calls you to that peaceful ſhore,
Where ſorrow, pain and death are known no more.

PART THIRD.

Euphronius; or the Death of the Rev. JAMES HARTLEY, *late of Haworth.*

EUPHRONIUS, partner of my joy and care,
No more, thy gen'rous ſympathy, I ſhare.
Thy ear is clos'd to ev'ry plaintive ſtrain;
Thy friendly counſels, now, I aſk in vain.

Friendſhip, which, ev'ry pious boſom, warms,
Euphronius ſhew'd, in all its pleaſing forms.
As points the needle to the northern pole,
So, upright views directed all his ſoul.
He knew the arts of flatt'ry to deſpiſe;
His mind was open and without diſguiſe.
Succeſſive years his faithfulneſs can prove,
His kindneſs, candor, ſympathy and love;
His ſkill to counſel, and his pious care
To warn his friends of ev'ry hurtful ſnare.

O may

O may my ſoul his footſteps oft review ;
Obſerve the track, his bright example drew ;
And, with a ſteady zeal, the heav'nly path purſue !

'Twas ne'er his aim to mingle with the great ;
He liv'd contented, in a low eſtate :
Secure from noiſy pride's ambitious ſtrife,
Which often poiſons all the ſweets of life.

The lowly mind, alone, contentment knows ;
A haughty ſpirit robs us of repoſe.
So lightnings blaſt the tow'ring mountain's brow ;
While humble vales, in ſafety, ſmile below.
Contentment will the happy portion be
Of heav'nly patience, tho' in poverty.

Faſtoſus ſoars aloft, and ſtrives to climb
In worldly ſplendor, with the wings of time.
Of various gifts of providence poſſeſs'd,
Nor wealth nor greatneſs can procure his reſt.
No interval of ſolid peace he knows ;
Tormenting paſſions give him no repoſe.
His anxious heart, oppreſt with inward ſtrife,
Can ſcarce ſuſtain the weary load of life.

When the bright crown the monarch's head adorns,
The ſhining jewels, ſcarcely, hide the thorns.
With mighty pomp, and regal enſigns grac'd,
His height of grandeur makes him more unbleſt.

Involv'd in cares and woes, an endleſs train,
His weighty honors but increaſe his pain.

Euphronius ſpent his life amongſt the poor;
Contentment was to him a conſtant ſtore.
The golden bait, he ſteadily defy'd,
And in his native village liv'd and dy'd.
Some only ſeek the ſons of wealth to pleaſe;
They hunt for lucre, precedence and eaſe;
And care not for the flock, but only mind the fleece.
Pity theſe poor, theſe ſtarving ſouls, O God!
Pity the purchaſe of a Saviour's blood;
And ſend them faithful guides, whoſe pious care,
Shall pluck them from the captivating ſnare;
Who will not ſhun to publiſh all thy will,
With warm affection, ſteadineſs and zeal.
This was my friend's concern; but now he lies,
Inactive in the grave, till JESUS bid him riſe.

His mem'ry was, betimes, divinely ſtor'd
With the rich treaſures of the ſacred word.
Strong and tenacious, ſtill it kept its pow'r,
Thro' age and ſickneſs, to his dying hour.

Vaſt was his ſtretch of thought, and large his ſoul;
His judgment kept the helm, and could controul
His weaker paſſions, and the reins command,
In almoſt ev'ry work, he took in hand.

Wrong

Wrong not the muſe; ſhe means not to relate
Things, inconſiſtent with this mortal ſtate.
The man that moſt his Maker's image bears,
Boaſts not perfection, in this vale of tears.
But grace in dear *Euphronius* kept the throne,
And in his temper and his actions ſhone.

As flow'rs, attracted by the genial ray,
Expand their bloſſoms, with the op'ning day.
To meet the ſun; ſo did *Euphronius* live
On nought this dark, benighted world can give.
He look'd to Jeſus, with a fixed eye,
For life, for growth and ev'ry kind ſupply.
Faith points to him, her magnet in the ſkies,
When tempeſts blow, or ſtormy troubles riſe.

No low, diſhoneſt arts, *Euphronius* try'd,
In terms obſcure, his ſentiments to hide.
His heart was open, and his language clear,
Suited to gain the inattentive ear.

His little flock, the faithful ſhepherd fed;
In paſtures fair and green, their ſouls were led;
"All things," he cry'd, "ye humble ſouls, are yours."
And then, he open'd, grace's richeſt ſtores;
Then did his words, with heav'nly pow'r, impart
Rich conſolation, to the wounded heart.
In ſtrains of comfort, with a mild addreſs,
He clear'd the doubts and ſoften'd the diſtreſs

Of humble minds; directing them to fly
To Jeſus; and upon his grace rely.

Wonder and joy, alternate, ſeiz'd the ſoul,
While ſtreams of goſpel-eloquence did roll
From his dear lips: and his majeſtic look,
Prov'd, that he felt the force of what he ſpoke.
It was a feaſt divine, with dainties ſtor'd;
The richeſt viands crown the goſpel board.

The ſoul, entangl'd by ſome hurtful ſnare,
Witneſs'd the ſhepherd's kind, reſtoring care.
Unruly men had faithful warnings giv'n;
The weak were ſtrengthen'd in the way to heav'n.

The ſcriptures were the rule of what he taught;
He ſtudied theſe, with cloſe and ſteady thought:
He, text with text, compar'd; and brought to view
From grace's ſtorehouſe, things both old and new:
Theſe were his conſtant joy, his conſtant ſong;
They rul'd his heart, and dwelt upon his tongue.
By theſe, as by a chart, he ſhew'd the way,
To ſhun the dangers of the rocky ſea.

He introduc'd not fancy's airy dreams;
Nor the dull round of philoſophic themes.
'Twas not his aim to teach *Platonic* rules;
Nor yet the fooliſh jargon of the ſchools.

On

On uſeleſs queſtions, he diſdain'd to dwell;
To lull the conſcience, on the brink of hell;
While ruthleſs death, the ſinner's ſteps, attends,
And ſure deſtruction, o'er his head, impends.
" Reaſon's a gift divine, *Eupbronius* cries,
A precious gift, the off-ſpring of the ſkies:
It dignifies mankind; by this preferr'd,
We ſtand diſtinguiſh'd from the brutal herd.
But human reaſon ſhould not ſtill preſume
To guide the ſoul, in revelation's room.
Let reaſon humbly learn to know her place,
And bow ſubmiſſive to the word of grace.
Dim-ſighted reaſon muſt the helm reſign,
And be directed by the page divine;
Hence form her judgment, hence her notions draw,
And own the page divine her ſov'reign law."

With gentle ſpeech, exhortative and mild,
(So ſpeaks a father to a fav'rite child)
He preſt his flock to ev'ry pious deed,
And in the paths of virtue to proceed.
Be witneſs, ye, who have, from year to year,
Had large experience of his pious care.
Remember ſtill the ſolemn charges giv'n,
As he enforc'd the ſacred laws of heav'n.
Walk as he walk'd; his bright example trace;
So will you beſt adorn the truths of grace.

With

With ſtudious care, his preaching was deſign'd
To fix conviction, on the thoughtleſs mind;
By goſpel bands, the humble ſoul to draw;
Or rouze the guilty, by the thund'ring law.
The terrors of the Lord, the preacher knew,
And often brought them, to the ſinner's view;
Death's ſure approach; th' eternal judgment near;
The ſolemn reck'ning, at the awful bar;
With ſerious air, he ſet, before their eyes,
The certain proceſs of that grand aſſize;
The ſentence paſt, the guilty held in chains,
In outer darkneſs, and eternal pains.

And while he ſpake, the thunders ſeem'd to roll;
Convictive terrors ſeiz'd the ſtupid ſoul.
His juſt rebuke, the haughty ſinner felt;
The haughty ſinner trembl'd at his guilt;
Before his view, his youthful follies riſe;
His crimes, enormous, reaching to the ſkies;
Rouz'd from his impious dream, 'tis now his cry,
"O mercy, ſave a wretch, condemn'd to die!"
With humble heart, he thus begins to pray,
And, on his bended knees, is heard to ſay,

Almighty Maker! God of boundleſs love!
Look down, propitious, on a guilty worm;
Vile, wretched, worthleſs, loathſome, ſelf-abhor'd;
Yet, craving mercy, thro' the blood divine,

By

By Jeſus, ſhed for men: my only ground
Of hope, for pardon, and acceſs to thee.
Behold me, trembling at thy awful feet,
Stunn'd with the thund'ring voice of *Sinai*'s curſe;
Oppreſs'd with guilt; defil'd with fouleſt ſtains;
O waſh me, in the Lamb's redeeming blood.

And thou, Redeemer kind of ruin'd man,
Once bleeding, on the ſhameful tree, to ſave
My guilty ſoul from hell, and curſed ſin!
To thee, I look, thou healer of mankind!
With weeping eyes, and deeply mournful heart;
In tender love, behold my proſtrate ſoul,
Helpleſs and ſelf-condemn'd: I ſmite my breaſt,
And loud, for mercy, pard'ning mercy, cry;
Of merit deſtitute, I nought can plead,
But what from thy own goodneſs, freely ſprings.
My mouth is ſtopt, and multiplied crimes
Call for thy vengeance, on my guilty head.
And, O thou Judge ſupreme, ſhouldſt thou diſplay
Thy awful wrath, on this devoted breaſt,
I muſt pronounce thee, juſt in my deſtruction.
Yet O! let heav'nly pity plead, and ſave
The vileſt wretch, that ever ſued for grace.

The God of mercy hears the humble cry,
And ſaves the ſoul, that ſtood condemn'd to die.

He's

He's pardon'd, cloath'd in righteouſneſs divine,
And heav'nly graces, in his temper ſhine.
Now ſaints rejoice, and angels ſhout above,
To ſee the wonders of redeeming love.

But dear *Euphronius* felt his frame decay,
By ſlow degrees, his vitals waſte away.
His happy mind, compos'd to ſweeteſt peace,
Wiſh'd only for the day of his releaſe.

Calm was his temper, and his ſoul ſerene,
With patience arm'd, amidſt the trying ſcene:
No murm'ring thoughts diſturb his happy mind;
Like the ſmooth ſea, unruffl'd by the wind,
Its billows ſleep; it ſeems a mighty plain,
And one majeſtic ſmile adorns the main.

Clear was his proſpect of the vaſt reward
Of heav'nly bliſs, by ſov'reign grace prepar'd.
His ſetting ſun was cloudleſs, bright and clear,
Rejoicing, that the happy goal was near.
Celeſtial comforts all his pow'rs ſuſtain,
Support his fainting heart, and eaſe his pain;
Till he reſigns the laſt remains of breath,
Infolded in the friendly arms of death.

His happy ſoul, then, takes his deſtin'd flight
To reach the coaſts of uncreated light;

Releaſed

Releaſed from the weight of cumbrous clay,
By angels guided in th' etherial way,
To the unclouded realms of everlaſting day.

They quickly reach the paradiſe above,
Where boundleſs pleaſures and immortal love
Extend their ſway; thro' all the wide domain,
For ever flouriſh, and for ever reign.

The bliſsful fields and ſweet etherial bow'rs,
Adorn'd with painted ranks of deathleſs flow'rs,
Breathe heav'nly fragrance: proſpects ever new
Invite the eye and open to the view.

The beating ſtorm of adverſe life is o'er,
The noiſy tempeſt ſtuns his ears no more;
With heav'nly tranſport, glowing in his breaſt,
He gains the port of everlaſting reſt.

The gath'ring crowds around the corpſe attend;
Each one laments the loſs of ſuch a friend;
The penſive widow heaves the deep'ned ſigh,
And briny tears deſcend from ev'ry eye.

PART FOURTH.

Death's Dominion deſtroyed.

BUT ſee, the mighty ruler of the day
Advances, with a mild and gentle ray.
I'll quit the ſolemn theme, ſuſpend the lyre,
Walk o'er the mead, the blooming ſcene admire;
Shake, from my boſom, each corroding care,
And taſte the ſweetneſs of the balmy air.

The roſy-finger'd morn bedecks the eaſt;
For ev'ry ſenſe, prepares a plenteous feaſt;
And jocund day, with gaudy luſtre, gilds
The hills and vales, the purling ſtreams and fields.
The ſeaſon temp'rate, and the æther pure,
Inchanting ſcenes the raviſh'd ſight allure:
Lo cheerful ſpring adorns the flow'ry plains,
In ev'ry field, refreſhing fragrance reigns;
The gentle zephyrs fan the blooming trees,
And wafted odours ſwell the vernal breeze;

The flow'rs expoſe their lovely charms to view,
Their op'ning tufts drink up the ſilver dew.

The fiercer winds in gloomy caverns lie;
No roaring tempeſts diſcompoſe the ſky;
'Tis all ſerene; creation ſmiles around,
A beauteous robe adorns the fertile ground;
While ſofteſt muſic warbles thro' the grove,
And ev'ry note is innocence and love.

The ſprightly lark attunes her *matin* lay;
The cheerful linnet hails the new-born day.
The ſhrill-tongu'd thruſh, in lofty ſtrains, abounds,
The diſtant hills reflect the pleaſing ſounds.

The pearly dew-drops ev'ry leaf adorn,
Refreſh the graſs, and bleſs the ſpringing corn;
Earth's kind productions quickly ſhall appear,
And ſmiling plenty crown the jocund year.
Harveſts ſhall ſpring from the manured ſoil,
And ripen'd crops reward the peaſant's toil.

The fertile earth and the extended ſkies
Proclaim their Author infinitely wiſe,
And infinitely great; but ſtill we trace
Sublimer wonders in the world of grace.

He form'd the ſun, that central ſource of light,
With all the rolling glories of the night;

Pale *Cynthia*, moving in her ſilver car;
Each roving planet, and each fixed ſtar.
He kindled up, at firſt, their glowing flames;
He tells their numbers, and he calls their names.
What worlds on worlds, th' aſſiſted ſenſe may view,
High in the concave of etherial blue!
He form'd, ſuſtains, and manages the whole,
From the equator to the diſtant pole.
He bid them all perform their myſtic round;
The morning ſtars, in joyful ſongs, abound.

Man is the fruit of his creating breath;
Nay more, the purchaſe of his pain and death.
Th' Almighty's call firſt wak'd him from the ground;
The moving clay obey'd the vital ſound.
The *creature* roſe obedient to his word.
But, by his blood, the *rebel* is reſtor'd.
Myſterious proofs of ſov'reign mercy ſhine,
And boundleſs wiſdom, in the plan divine.

To dwell below, the great Redeemer came,
Aſſum'd our nature, bore our guilt and ſhame.
He ſunk beneath our woes, a heavy load,
And gave his life to make our peace with God.
His hands were bound, our liberty to gain;
His blood was ſhed to waſh away our ſtain;
He groan'd, that we might ſing with chearful voice;
He wept aloud, that ſinners might rejoice.

He

He dy'd, the king of terrors to deſtroy,
And make the gate of death the gate of endleſs joy.

The faithful ſoul can now in triumph ſing,
" O death! where is thy formidable ſting?
Where are the terrors of thy vengeful eye?
Thy dart, from which, the guilty wiſh to fly?
No ſting appears, no killing dart I ſee;
No terrors brood upon thy brow, for me.
Thou haſt a heav'nly ſmile upon thy face;
I long to claſp thee, in a fond embrace.
Come, thou bleſt meſſenger of peace and love,
Tranſmit my ſoul, to the bright realms above.
But whence haſt thou this ſweet celeſtial air?
Once, black as hell, but now an angel fair.
Strange tranſformation! but the cauſe I ſee,
JESUS has dy'd, has ſhed his blood for me;
Thanks be to God, who gives the victory!
Faith in his name forbids my ſlaviſh fear,
And makes me triumph e'en when death is near."

Ye echoing ſkies! repeat the Saviour's name;
His love, thro' all the ſtarry worlds, proclaim.
Ye circling ſpheres! dwell on the charming ſound;
Bear it, ye winds! the wide creation round.

Death ſhall not o'er the juſt for ever reign;
No! he, that conquers all, ſhall ſoon be ſlain.

Him to ſubdue, the kind Redeemer gave
His precious life; he dy'd, the dead to ſave!
Death could not him, a pris'ner long detain;
He quickly broke the adamantine chain.
Vain were the *Roman* watch, the *Jewiſh* ſeal,
And all the *traits* of phariſaic zeal:
The deſtin'd hour arrives; the conqu'ror roſe,
And nobly triumph'd over all his foes.
The roſy morn had ſcarce unbarr'd the ſkies,
But vanquiſh'd death precipitantly flies,
With all his ghaſtly train; and Jeſus gave
Full proof of vict'ry o'er the gloomy grave.
Pris'ners of hope! the glorious day is nigh,
When Chriſt your bands ſhall looſe, and death himſelf ſhall die.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

The Chriſtian Miniſter's Farewell to his Flock.

A

SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY

THE DEATH

OF THE

Rev. JAMES HARTLEY,

Late of HAWORTH, YORKSHIRE.

By WILLIAM CRABTREE.

Your Fathers, where are they; and the Prophets, do they live for ever? ZECH. i. 5.

The Memory of the Juſt is bleſſed. PRO. x. 7.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the congregation at large, and the church of Jeſus Chriſt, at Haworth, *late under the care of our honoured brother in the Lord, Mr* James Hartley; *grace and peace be multiplied.*

BELOVED BRETHREN,

THE unfeigned regard I had for that eminent ſervant of God, whoſe death occaſioned the following diſcourſe, and a ſtrong deſire to contribute my poor mite towards perpetuating the memory of ſo good a man, and ſo valuable a member of ſociety; together with, a concern that we may all attend to the important charge he left with his flock, have induced me to make the following meditations public, in conjunction with The Reign of Death. *An intimate and endeared friendſhip ſubſiſted between me and your late paſtor, without interruption, for more than thirty years. It ſomewhat reſembled that between* David *and* Jonathan. *He is fled from this world of toil and ſtrife, and I am left behind, to weep and rejoice at the remembrance of former times.*

You

You will eaſily perceive, that the following pages contain the ſubſtance of what was delivered to you from the pulpit. Some things indeed are here contracted, which were then more largely inſiſted on; and ſome thoughts are added for the farther illuſtration of the ſubject. For this liberty, I ſuppoſe you will allow, that no farther apology is needful.

I am ſenſible, this diſcourſe is not formed on a popular plan, nor have I the vanity to think it will be acceptable to every reader. The things, however, recommended in the text, appear to me of great importance, and particularly needful to be inſiſted on, in the preſent day. And if any thing here ſuggeſted on the ſubject, may, under a divine bleſſing, become ſerviceable, for the conviction of the ſecure ſinner, the comfort of the mourning ſoul, and the happy revival of primitive order and diſcipline in the houſe of God, the publication of this ſermon will fully anſwer the end, deſire and earneſt prayer of,

Dear Brethren,
Your affectionate friend,
And devoted ſervant,
In the goſpel of Chriſt,
WILLIAM CRABTREE.

BRADFORD,
April 10, 1780.

THE

Chriſtian Miniſter's Farewell, &c.

2 CORINTH. xiii. 11.

Finally, brethren, farewell: Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace ſhall be with you.

A Very mournful diſpenſation of Divine Providence has occaſioned the reading of theſe words in your ears, this day. A diſpenſation which, no doubt, is ſeverely felt by many in this aſſembly, as well as in other places. A breach is now made, which had been long expected, and greatly feared. Death, our laſt enemy, diſſolves every connection among men, whether natural, civil, or religious; however cloſe, however firm or ſtrong they be. He cuts the ties which unite us together, in the ſeveral relations in life. We have alarming proofs of this, from day

day to day. Death is frequently making breaches in families, neighbourhoods and churches. But, perhaps, none are more painful and affecting, than the breaches made between goſpel miniſters and the people of their charge, eſpecially when the union has been cloſe, firm and hearty; as was the caſe, I have reaſon to believe, between you, my dear brethren of this church, and your late worthy paſtor, who is now numbered with the dead.

The laſt time I found him capable of converſing, I aſked him, if any portion of God's word lay upon his mind, which he could wiſh to have preached from, upon the occaſion of his deceaſe. He immediately mentioned the words I have juſt read. You ſee, then, dear brethren, we have a text of your late venerable paſtor's chuſing; and it is the laſt text he choſe for your edification. Had he himſelf been employed in opening and applying the ſubject before us, you might have expected great things. But this is not the caſe. He is gone to his everlaſting home, to his father's houſe above; and we are left behind, in the regions of ſorrow and pain, to make the beſt improvement we can, of the time, talents and advantages yet in our hands.

The bleſſed apoſtle is here cloſing his excellent letter to the church at *Corinth*; and in the words now under our regard, with a very ſerious wiſh for their welfare, he takes an affectionate leave of them; ſums up, as it were, the whole of what he had wrote to them, gives them his beſt advice, and aſſures them of the preſence of the God of love and peace with them, in a practical conformity to what he recommends.

It was ſcarce poſſible for your late paſtor to have ſelected a paſſage from the inſpired volume, with a particular application to you, more expreſſive of his love to you, and his deſire for your welfare and happineſs, than that which we have read. The text, I believe, contains the ſentiments, and was the index of his dying heart, in reſpect to you. You may conſider it as a token of the ſincereſt regard for you; you may conſider it as his laſt advice to you.

Men are apt to pay great regard to the cautions, counſels and charges of dying friends. And tho' ſome may carry this to ſuch a length, as that it borders on ſuperſtition; yet certainly there is ſomething ſolemn and

and ſtriking, in the requeſts and admonitions of a man on the verge of the eternal world. The laſt accents of a tongue juſt going to be bound up in the ſilence of death, demand cloſe attention, and often make a deep impreſſion. The circumſtances of the ſpeaker have a natural tendency to enforce what is delivered by him. Hence, the all-wiſe God has ſometimes inſpired his ſervants, in theſe circumſtances, with ſuch Meſſages, as he deſigned ſhould make a deep impreſſion on the hearers, and be long kept in memory. The patriarch *Jacob*, when juſt ſtepping into the eternal world, by a ſpirit of prophecy, foretold what ſhould befall his offspring for ages to come. He called his ſons, and ſaid, *Gather yourſelves together, that I may tell you that which ſhall befall you in the laſt days.—Hear, ye ſons of Jacob, and hearken unto Iſrael your father.** He ſignified, in the moſt ſolemn manner, his diſapprobation of ſome parts of their conduct, and gave them ſome important hints in reference to their future proceedings. *And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his ſons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghoſt, and was gathered unto his people.*§

God

* Gen. xlix. 1, 2. § Ver. 33.

God ſends his ſummons to his ſervant *Moſes*, who had been *faithful in all his houſe*, to go up to mount *Nebo* and die, and *be gathered unto his people*. And in order to this, he muſt deliver a meſſage to the choſen tribes, as a dying man; and leave them a parting bleſſing. *And this is the bleſſing wherewith Moſes the man of God bleſſed the children of Iſrael, before his death.** *Joſhua*, the ſon of *Nun*, calls all *Iſrael* together, to hear his farewell ſermon. And to enforce what he had to ſay upon his audience, *Behold*, ſays he, *this day I am going the way of all the earth*. And having delivered his diſcourſe, and diſmiſſed the people, the next we hear of him is, that *Joſhua the ſon of Nun, the ſervant of the Lord, died.* § We have alſo, the laſt words of *David*, the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael*.—From all which it appears, how reaſonable it is to pay due attention to the advices and counſels of dying ſaints, as they are conformable to, and founded on, the divine word. Upon this principle, the apoſtle *Paul* thus addreſſes *Timothy*; *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word*; *be*

* Deut. xxxii. 49, 50, and xxxiii. 1. and xxiv. 29

§ Joſh. xxiii. 2, 14.

be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-ſuffering and doctrine; and afterwards adds, *I am ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.** So when we hear a dying brother, with a panting heart, a faltring tongue, and quivering lips, thus beſpeak us, *Finally, brethren, farewell; be perfect; be of good comfort; be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace ſhall be with you:* Should we not be all attention? Should we not ponder *theſe ſayings in our hearts?*—You can have no doubt of the dying ſpeaker's ſincerity and affection; you need not be told that what is ſaid, is the reſult of the cloſeſt thought, and matureſt deliberation.

In the famous and flouriſhing city of *Corinth*, the apoſtle *Paul* had, by the ſpecial direction of the Almighty, publiſhed the glad tidings of free and full ſalvation, in the name of Jeſus. The Lord had told him, *he had much people in that city*, to be called *out of darkneſs into marvellous light.*§ Accordingly, the word had great ſucceſs. Many were turned to God, and became obedient to the faith. A numerous church was gathered, and

* Tim. iv. 1, 2. § Act. xviii. 1, 10.

and large gifts, and great grace beſtowed on the members of it. This ambaſſador of Chriſt, continued preaching the word among them for a conſiderable time; and an abundant bleſſing attended his labours. But being called into other parts of the vineyard, great irregularities took place among the *Corinthian* converts, and many ſhameful things were done by them. Yet theſe things did not abate the apoſtle's love to them, and zeal for their welfare. He wrote to them an excellent epiſtle, and after that a ſecond; of which, the words now under conſideration are a concluding part. *Finally, brethren, farewell, &c.* In which we may obſerve,

I. The affecting manner in which the apoſtle takes his leave of the *Corinthian* church. *Finally, brethren, Farewell.*

II. The ſolemn charge he gives them: *Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace.*

III. A precious and comprehenſive promiſe annexed: *And the God of love and peace ſhall be with you.*

I. Obſerve the affecting manner in which the apoſtle takes his leave of the *Corinthian* church.

1. He ſalutes them under the endearing appellation of *brethren*. He uſes this term, not by way of compliment, without any meaning, as is but too often the caſe. In the mouth of an inſpired meſſenger of Chriſt, this word is emphatical. Hereby he indicates his affection for them, and would quicken their attention and regard to what he has to ſay. The *Corinthians* had behaved to the apoſtle in a very diſreſpectful manner. They had deſpiſed him for his natural defects; particularly for ſome impediment, as it ſhould ſeem, which attended him in ſpeaking. They had preferred others to him, who was the chief of the apoſtles.* Notwithſtanding which, he ſtill loves them, and ſtiles them *brethren*. A bigotted, cenſorious ſpirit knows not to ſhew mercy, even on the moſt reſpectable character. What pity is it, that the profeſſing followers of the *Prince of peace*, ſhould be ſo unlike their divine Maſter! O that chriſtians of all denominations among us, were more concerned to live under

* 2 Cor. x. 10. and xii. 11.

under the governing influence of that charity, which *thinketh no evil; which beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things.**

Chriſtians, true chriſtians of every name, are *brethren.* They have all one Father; by whom they are *begotten again to a lively hope.*§ They are all *partakers of the divine nature,* and bear the divine image. There is a ſtriking likeneſs between them, in heart, ſpeech, and behaviour. Their ſpirit, temper, and diſpoſition, are materially the ſame; for they have all *the mind of Chriſt.*† They all ſpeak the ſame language; the language of *Canaan.*‡ Their lips are as *threads of ſcarlet; and their tongue as choice ſilver.* Their walk, for ſubſtance, is the ſame; for it is ſuch *as becometh the goſpel of Chriſt.* (a) They are, *as the ſons of God, blameleſs and harmleſs, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation.* They *deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts; and live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world.* (b) Like brethren, they all conſtitute one ſpiritual family; called the *houſhold of faith.* They

* 1 Cor. xiii. § 2 Pet. i. 4, and 1 Pet. i. 3. † 1 Cor. ii. 16. ‡ Zeph. iii. 9. (a) Phil. i. 27, and ii. 15. (b) Tit. ii. 11, 12.

all look to, depend upon, and are richly ſupplied by, the hand of their heavenly Father. Their ſpiritual intereſts are naturally involved in each other. They weep and rejoice together. They partake of each other's ſorrows and conſolations. They mingle their prayers and praiſes together. They throw, as it were, their whole ſtock into one promiſcuous heap; no one *caring for his own things; but every man for the things that are Jeſus Chriſt's.* And they are entitled to, and intereſted in, the ſame glorious patrimony, ſettled on them by their heavenly Father. They are *heirs of God,* and *joint heirs with Chriſt.* As ſuch, they ought to *love as brethren,* and chearfully attend to the advice given in our text.

2. The apoſtle expreſſes a parting wiſh for the *Corinthian* church, *Farewell.* This was not, as obſerved above, a word of courſe, without any thought or concern. It is expreſſive of his ſincere deſire for their welfare and proſperity in every view. The *Engliſh* word, is a compound of *fare,* and *well. Fare* is put for the entertainment a perſon is favoured with, at home or abroad: and to *farewell,* is to be well accommodated, and plentifully ſupplied. This term, then, ſeems to

to imply a wiſh for the happineſs of the *Corinthians*, both as men and as chriſtians; both in body and ſoul.

He wiſhed them well in their church-ſtate. He had this in view in his preaching while among them, and in both the excellent epiſtles which he wrote to them. In which, he points out their defects, anſwers their objections, ſolves their enquiries, and reproves them for their irregularities; with the firmeſt integrity, and warmeſt affection. In a word; he does all in his power to eſtabliſh good order among them. And here he expreſſes his earneſt wiſh, that they might profit by all he had done for them, ſpoken and wrote to them. It was his deſire that God might dwell among them, rule over them, and in them; and ſo make them a happy, honourable, peaceable and fruitful people, in their relation one to another, as brethren in fellowſhip together.

He wiſhed them well as individuals. His deſire and prayer to God for them was, *That God would grant them according to the riches of his glory, to be ſtrengthened with might by his ſpirit in the inner man. That Chriſt might*

*dwell in their hearts by faith, that they being rooted and grounded in love, might be able to comprehend, with all ſaints, what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge; that they might be filled with all the fulneſs of God.** He affectionately deſired that their *ſouls might proſper*, as the ſoul of *Gaius* is ſaid to do; that they might *grow in grace*, and *in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; that they might *abound in hope, thro' the power of the Holy Ghoſt*; enjoy acceſs to, and communion with God, and *be filled with the fruits of righteouſneſs* to his praiſe and glory.—Such was the apoſtle's concern for the dear ſaints at *Corinth*, for whom he was *willing to ſpend and be ſpent*. May ſucceeding miniſters breathe the ſame ſpirit!

3. This farewell was *final: finally, brethren, farewell*, q. d. To come to a cloſe; to ſum up all in a word, and ſo take my leave of you.

This term *finally*, ſeems to have reference to what had already been done. The apoſtle here would lead them to recollect his preaching among them, and review what he had wrote

* Eph. iii. 16—19.

wrote to them. And permit me, my dear brethren, on this occaſion, to remind you, what your late worthy paſtor has done for and among you. He has ſerved you in the goſpel of Chriſt, with unwearied diligence and fidelity, for more than thirty years. He has watched over you, as a ſhepherd over his flock. He has fed you with the wholeſome words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. You dwelt on his affectionate heart. His *care for* you was *natural.* He was *gentle among you as a nurſe cheriſheth her children* He opened up to you the truths of the goſpel, in their beauty, harmony, and rich variety. In this pulpit, he maintained and enlarged upon the ſeveral parts of doctrinal, experimental and practical divinity, in a judicious and maſterly manner. While health would permit, his public preaching was accompanied with private viſits, in which, you, no doubt, can recollect his wholeſome counſels, his pious exhortations, his faithful reproofs and fervent prayers. All which rendered him, under God, *a helper of your joy, and a ſtrengthener of your hands,* in the way to heaven. And all his labours among you, were with a deſign to promote the great ends ſpecified in the text. *Perfection, comfort, unity and peace,*

were the great things to which his doctrine and conduct led. For the truth of this, I appeal to your conſciences in the ſight of God. And I believe you have not the leaſt inclination to deny it.

But your dear paſtor has now bid you a *final* farewell. He has often bid you farewell, when he has taken his leave of you for a ſeaſon. This hath ſometimes been with heart-felt pleaſure, occaſioned by the ſteadineſs and fervor of your minds in the ways of God; at other times, perhaps, he has taken his leave of you with pain and ſorrow, on account of what he has heard from you, or ſeen among you. But theſe kinds of ſalutations are now over. You hear his voice no more. How often have you heard him pour out his ſoul in prayer to God for you? But his prayers are now turned into praiſes. And he is reaping the fruits of a good conſcience to God and you, in the regions of peace and undiſturbed repoſe. He will, I truſt, have the unſpeakable ſatisfaction of welcoming ſome (O that I could ſay, *all)* of you, to the realms of bliſs. So ſhall you be *his joy and crown of rejoicing* for ever. But till then, he has once for all, in the language of the text,

bid

bid you farewell. This farewell is a final one.——We paſs on to

II. The ſolemn charge here given. *Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace.* This charge conſiſts of four branches.

I. *Be perfect.* A perfect freedom from ſin in the preſent ſtate, is not intended here; nor indeed in any other part of the inſpired volume. The ſaints of God, 'tis true, are ſaid to be *complete*, and to be *without ſpot.** But this is to be underſtood of them in point of juſtification, as found in Chriſt, and clothed with his ſpotleſs righteouſneſs. *Comparative* perfection is aſcribed to God's people, with reſpect to their converſation. So we read of ſome being perfect *in their generation*; i. e. when compared with thoſe among whom they lived.§ Perfection in other parts of ſcripture ſeems to intend, *uprightneſs* or *ſincerity*. So *Job* was *a perfect and an upright man*;† he was throughly ſincere; but at the ſame time, he utterly diſclaimed all pretenſions to ſinleſs perfection.

But

* Col. ii. 10. § Cant. iv. 7. Gen.
† Job, i. 8, and ix. 20.

But the perfection here intended, as I apprehend, is to be underſtood of thoſe things which belonged to the church at *Corinth*, in a *ſocial* capacity. On this head, very great imperfection had appeared among them. And it moſt certainly was their duty to rectify what was out of order. Some had been awfully criminal among them, and others had connived at their ſin. Theſe, the apoſtle had ſharply reproved; he had charged them to repent of, and turn from, thoſe evils which were ſo pernicious to their peace, comfort and proſperity; and ſo be more perfectly conformable to the rules of Chriſt.

He here implicitly charges them, alſo, to labour after the ſtricteſt diſcipline in future. It is certain, there can be no ſpiritual proſperity in the houſe of the Lord, where there is no concern for purity of diſcipline. We ſhould not contract the doors of the ſanctuary, ſo as to ſhut out him *that is weak in the faith*; yet we ſhould, on the other hand, be careful not to open them wider than what God's word allows. If men of corrupt principles, or of a vain converſation, are admitted into the connection, or any are ſuffered to continue, when they appear of that ſtamp, the

the purity, peace and comfort of the church will be greatly injured, if not overthrown. The preſence and ſmiles of the Holy One of *Iſrael*, will be withdrawn. On the other hand, if goſpel order is duly attended to, tho' our number be ſmall, and our circumſtances low; yet peace will be within *Zion's walls, and proſperity within her palaces.*

This perfection, likewiſe, includes a ſteady adherence to the grand and leading doctrines of the goſpel. While ſome expend their zeal and vigor in favour of circumſtantials in religion, and ſome particular modes of expreſſion; ſtriving about *words, to no profit, but to the ſubverting the hearers*; there is in others, too much coolneſs and indifference, reſpecting the fundamental articles of the chriſtian faith. Theſe ought to be dearer to us than our lives. We ſhould *buy the truth*, but not *ſell it*, at any price whatſoever.* We ſhould be valiant for it. *Contend earneſtly*, and *ſtrive together* for it.§ This is the church's crown and glory; and ſhe ſhould hold it faſt unto the end. The bleſſed Redeemer highly approved of, and commended the churches at *Pergamos* and *Philadelphia*, for their ſteadineſs

* Pro. § Jude iii. Phil. i. 27.

neſs in the truth.* And, ſuch a conduct certainly contributes to the perfection of the church of God. It indicates great weakneſs to be perpetually *toſſed to and fro, with every wind of doctrine.*

Add to this, a zealous diſcharge of every duty, civil or religious. A daily care to live in ſtrict conformity, as far as may be, to that divine rule, which is *holy, juſt and good.* An endeavour to ſtand complete in all the will of God: to conduct ourſelves in the family, the cloſet, the church, and the world at large, *as becometh ſaints.* O that the profeſſors of chriſtianity had but a juſt ſenſe of the importance of this! There are moſt certainly, greater degrees of holineſs, both of temper and walk, attainable in the preſent ſtate, than even chriſtians in common are acquainted with; for want of diligence in the ways of God. Hence there ſhould be a *going on towards perfection. Not as tho' we had already attained, or were already perfect*; but we ſhould, with unabating vigor, *preſs forward* in the pleaſing path of holineſs. The Searcher of hearts complains of ſome, that he had not *found their works perfect.* §

It

* Rev. ii. 13, and iii. 18. § Rev. iii. 2.

It ſhould ſeem, the *Corinthians* had been very deficient in their duty one towards another. Chriſtians in church relation ought not to live to themſelves, nor only *mind their own things*; but every one alſo ſhould mind the things of others. The beauty and advantage of church fellowſhip very much depend, on each member's being found in the conſtant diſcharge of thoſe ſocial and relative duties, which are enjoined in the word of God. They are to caution, exhort, ſupport, relieve, ſtrengthen and edify one another, according to the ability beſtowed on them for that end. Had not the bleſſed apoſtle theſe, and ſuch like things in view, when he gave this charge to the *Corinthian* church, *Be perfect?* Do not theſe ſeveral particulars contribute to the perfection of a goſpel community? But I forbear to enlarge.

II. *Be of good comfort.* Tho' the children of God have great reaſon for grief and ſorrow; tho' they are often, on juſt grounds, weeping and complaining while in this world, yet they have frequent exhortations to rejoice. They are often *in heavineſs, thro' manifold temptations*; their ſouls are, at ſometimes, *caſt down within them*; and they are ſo oppreſſed

oppreſſed with ſorrow and affliction, that they can ſcarcely ſpeak to God or man; yet at the ſame time, they are never without ſolid and ſubſtantial ground of comfort. God has given them *everlaſting conſolation, and good hope thro' grace.* It is their duty, as well as privilege, to *be of good comfort.* It is ſuitable to their profeſſion of faith and confidence in the Moſt High. It is well-pleaſing in his ſight, and honourable to his cauſe and intereſt in the world. And certainly it muſt be of advantage to themſelves. *The joy of the Lord is their ſtrength.* A ſerene, vigorous, chearful temper of mind, gives them the boldneſs of a lion in the face of their enemies. It is ſerviceable in the diſcharge of duty, and in fighting *the good fight of faith.*

The God of all grace, in infinite condeſcenſion, ſhews regard for the comfort of his ſaints. He charges his miniſters to comfort them. The apoſtle *Paul,* under his direction, laboured much for the comfort of the ſaints, *Phil.* iv. 4. 1 *Theſ.* v. 15. He prayed earneſtly for it, *Col.* ii. 2. He laid before them the grounds of conſolation. And was much concerned for the promotion of their ſpiritual joy, and chriſtian chearfulneſs; that, being

being inſpired with courage and magnanimity, they might glory in tribulation, rejoicing in hope of the promiſed reſt. A melancholy, dejected, timorous ſpirit, is an affliction to a man's ſelf, uncomfortable to thoſe about him, and diſhonourable to God.

Permit me juſt to touch on the grounds and reaſons which real ſaints have, for being of good comfort. 1. They are intereſted in the free and unchanging love of God in Chriſt Jeſus. This is a ſolid ground of conſolation to them. It comforts their hearts more than the choiceſt wine. It may ſerve to animate the mind, and inſpire it with holy courage, and humble triumph, under the darkeſt diſpenſations. For *who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword?—Nay, in all theſe things, we are more than conquerors, thro' him that hath loved us. For I am perſuaded, &c.* Rom. viii. 35, 39.

2. The blood of Jeſus has atoned for all their guilt, and they are clothed in his ſpotleſs righteouſneſs. The obedience of Chriſt unto death for his church, makes void every indictment

indictment againſt her, removes the curſe of the divine law, and puts to ſilence the clamours of a guilty conſcience. This diſarms death of his dreadful ſting, and diſpels the gloomy horrors of the grave. Yea, it brightens the proſpect of approaching judgment, and the eternal world. This makes room for the ſaints in *the holieſt of all*, and gives them boldneſs before the throne of God. This, conſequently furniſhes out the ſaints with ſolid grounds for joy and triumph. They *joy in God, thro' Jeſus Chriſt, by whom they have received the atonement*. They ſing a new ſong to him that *hath loved them, and waſhed them from their ſins in his own blood.** Hence they are clothed in the ſpotleſs robe of a Saviour's righteouſneſs, and *juſtified from all things, from which they could not be juſtified by the law of Moſes.*§ They are *made the righteouſneſs of God in Jeſus*; who is the end of the law for *righteouſneſs to every one that believeth*. As ſuch, it affords them matter of ſolid joy and comfort. *Surely*, ſhall one ſay, *In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength.* And again, *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my ſoul ſhall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of ſalvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs.*†

* Rom. v. ii. Rev. i. 5. Eph. i. 7. § Act. xiii. 39.
† Iſa. xlv. 24, and lxi. 10.

3. There are immenſe treaſures of grace laid up for them in Chriſt Jeſus, whoſe riches are unſearchable. The needs of God's people are many; if we conſider, the ſins they have to ſtrive againſt, the temptations they have to grapple with, the afflictions they have to bear, and the duties they have to perform; but *my God ſhall ſupply them all, according to his riches in glory, by Chriſt Jeſus,* Phil. iv. 13. All their ſprings are in him. *Thro' his poverty they are made rich;* and his *grace is ſufficient for them.*

4. The good work of grace and ſalvation is already begun in them. They are *born* of God; *called out of darkneſs into God's marvellous light*; and adopted into the family of God. So that they may well ſay, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.* Pſa. cxxiii. 3. And that ſalvation which they have begun to experience, is full, free, complete and everlaſting. It will ſurely put an end to all their ſins, and all their ſorrows. It will leave neither its guilt to ſting them, its power to oppoſe them, nor its pollution to defile them. Let them, on this ground, be of good comfort, and ſay, *Behold, God is my ſalvation: I will truſt, and not be*

*afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my ſtrength and my ſong; he is alſo become my ſalvation!**

Moreover, 5. They are heirs of the kingdom of glory in the world to come. This is ſtiled, an *exceeding great and eternal weight of glory. The ſufferings of the preſent time are not worthy to be compared with it.* It is *the bleſſed hope of the* ſaints, and *the grace that is to be brought unto them at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.* It is their *Father's good pleaſure to give them this kingdom*; and therefore it is fit and reaſonable, that they ſhould rejoice in the hope of it.§ Theſe things, with many others that might be named, furniſh the children of God with a ſolid foundation for comfort and joy. And ſince they are charged to be of good comfort, how neceſſary is it, that they have theſe things much in view; that they may encourage themſelves in the Lord their God, and comfort one another with the words of everlaſting life!

III. The third branch of the exhortation is, *Be of one mind.* This advice is often given, and therefore muſt be of great importance.

* Iſ. xii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 5, 6. § 2 Cor. iv. 17. Rom. viii. 18. Tit. ii. 13.

portance. The diſciples of Chriſt are charged to be *of the ſame mind* one towards another; to be *all of one mind*; and to *endeavour to keep the unity of the ſpirit*.* Thus it was in the primitive church, Acts iv, 32. *The multitude of the diſciples were of one heart, and one ſoul.* And moſt certainly, this ought to be the caſe ſtill. There is as much neceſſity for it now as there was then. It is as needful, for the proſperity of the church, and the glory of God, as ever. And the bad conſequences attending the contrary, are as numerous, and as much to be dreaded as ever. Conſequently, the arguments enforcing it, are as powerful as ever. It muſt be allowed, that a perfect agreement in religious ſentiments, is not to be expected, ſo long as we are imperfect in knowledge. It never was the caſe, nor ever will be, while we are in the body.

The *Roman* pontiff affects to tyranize over men's conſciences, and even their underſtandings; by requiring them to believe only as the church believes. But this is as oppoſite to the ſpirit of the goſpel as darkneſs is to light. The religion of Jeſus requires no man to aſſent to that which he cannot ſee reaſon for, and ſufficient proof of. It requires none

* Rom. xii. 16. Eph. iv. 3. 1 Pet. iii. 8.

to do violence to their own underſtandings; or to pretend a belief of that, of which they cannot ſee the evidence.

I take the general ſenſe of this clauſe to be;—That care ſhould be taken, as to the admiſſion of members into a goſpel church; that none be received, who are ſtrangers to the neceſſary and important truths and duties of religion. That the members of ſuch church ſhould guard againſt a whimſical, fanciful turn of mind; a perpetual fondneſs for ſingularity; and an ambition to diſcover what no one has ever ſeen before; that they ſhould beware of diſturbing the brethren with their own *noſtrums*, which are, perhaps, not at all ſuited to inform or edify, but only calculated to puzzle and perplex; and that they ſhould lay aſide all inclination to *ſtrive about words to no profit*.

The profeſſing followers of Jeſus, and members of goſpel churches, can never be too much guarded againſt ſuch a temper as the above. It has done immenſe miſchief in the ſocieties of the ſaints; and is ſpreading its baneful influence in many places at this day. It originates in that pride from *whence cometh*

cometh contention; it betrays much vanity of mind; and has a tendency to draw off the attention, from the moſt weighty and important things. It ſavours ſtrongly of carnality; and is what the apoſtle blames the *Corinthian* church for, more than once. *For whereas there is among you envying and ſtrife, and diviſions are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* 1 Cor. iii. 3.

To rectify this, the apoſtle ſet out in his firſt epiſtle to this people, in the following manner; *Now I beſeech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no diviſions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together, in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgment.* He takes his leave of them here as he begun there: which may intimate, that the things mentioned here and there, were what he principally aimed at, in both his epiſtles. *Be of one mind.* q. d. "Pay the ſame uniform attention to the great and fundamental truths of the goſpel; evidence the ſame zeal in promoting them; attend to the ſame thing; and engage in the ſame laudable deſigns, for advancing the common cauſe of chriſtianity, in which ye are all embarked.—This I take to be the ſpirit of the exhortation.

1. This oneneſs of mind, then, ſhould be preſerved as much as may be, in the moſt important doctrines of the goſpel. Men may widely differ in their ideas of many texts of ſcripture, and of many circumſtances relative to the truths they believe in common, and yet preſerve the unity of the ſpirit. But if the eſſential doctrines of the goſpel, in their ſubſtance and reality, are deny'd by any, in the relation of church members, they are far from the apoſtle's rule laid down in the text. *How can two walk together*, for mutual edification, *except they be agreed*, in the moſt important things? How ſhall they all *ſpeak the ſame thing*, if they are not of the ſame judgment?*

2. —In all the branches of inſtituted worſhip. Such as, the miniſtry of the word, prayer to God, and the obſervation of the peculiar ordinances of the goſpel. Thus the primitive chriſtians *continued ſtedfaſtly in the apoſtle's doctrine and fellowſhip, in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* Act. ii. 42.

3. —In reference to the order and diſcipline of God's houſe. In this it is a happineſs

* Phil. i. 27. Jude xx. Eph. iv. 3.

neſs for church-members to *ſee eye to eye.* A church is the *houſhold of God*; there are *rulers* there: which idea ſuppoſes *rules* by which it is governed; things are to be *ſet in order*; and *done decently and in order.* Now the rules and orders are laid down in the word of God; and it is neceſſary that the ſaints ſhould be acquainted with them, and of one mind about them: that they may *ſtand perfect and complete in all the will of God.* Col. iv. 12. What is done in the houſe, and by the family of God, ſhould be with unanimity. Nothing ſhould be undertaken, or proſecuted, thro' *ſtrife or vain glory.* They ſhould not be *ſelf-willed*; but *ſubmit one to another in the fear of God*; and not be *wiſe in their own conceits.**

Here, my brethren, give me leave to ſpeak freely to you. You have not now, as formerly, a judicious paſtor to go before you in the management of church-affairs. No! You are now left in the wilderneſs, as *ſheep without a ſhepherd.* Let it be your ſtudy and endeavour, to act with unanimity in every weighty concern that may come before you. *See that ye fall not out by the way.* Thus it will appear to all, that you have profited by the la-

* Phil. ii. 3. Eph. v. 21. 1 Pet. v. 5. Rom. xii. 16.

bours and example of your late paſtor. Nothing would have diſtreſſed him more while living, than the thought of your being involved in ſtrife and contention after his deceaſe. But *I am perſuaded better things of you, my brethren, tho' I thus ſpeak.* Yet let me put you in mind of one thing, and beſeech you, *in the bowels of Jeſus Chriſt,* to endeavour after it. I mean, unanimity in the choice of another miniſter. I hope, thro' your prayers, and the interceſſions of others for you, God will, in his own time, ſend you *a paſtor after his own heart.* You have his promiſe to plead on that head, Jer. iii. 15. But be perſuaded not to fix your expectations too high. You can hardly think, humanly ſpeaking, to be provided with one in all reſpects equal to the laſt. Be that as it may; labour to unite in one object. It has often fallen out, that churches have ſplit and been divided upon the death of a paſtor.—Hence, I hope, you ſee the propriety and force of the exhortation, *be of one mind.*

IV. Live in peace.

Peace is an eſſential ingredient in true felicity, whether in this world or the next. The

The goſpel is a proclamation of peace. To procure peace, the Son of God ſhed his blood on the croſs. To bring it into the heart and conſcience, the Spirit of all grace is given. *God is not the Author of confuſion, but of peace, in the churches of the ſaints.* To *live in peace,* therefore, correſponds with the whole deſign of chriſtianity, and the great ends for which the Redeemer lived, ſuffered and died.

Now in order to a church's living in peace. —Care ſhould be taken, as hinted above, who are admitted to fellowſhip among them. That they be ſuch as give evidence of their faith in Chriſt, love to God, and ſubjection to the goſpel. There were *added unto the church daily, ſuch as ſhall be ſaved.*——Party debates ſhould be avoided.—Every one ſhould fill up his place with ſteadineſs and honour; they *ſhould not forſake the aſſembling of themſelves together.*—Unchriſtian-like tempers ſhould be mortified. Envy, wrath, bitterneſs, prejudice and malice, ſhould never be cheriſhed. Their direct tendency is the deſtruction of peace. 1 Pet. ii. 1.—Care ſhould be taken not willingly to offend one another, in word or deed. The wiſdom which is from above ſhould have its due influence upon every

every mind; it is *pure, peaceable, gentle,* and *eaſy to be entreated*; we ſhould *give none offence to Jew or Gentile, or the church of God.* —On the other hand, we ſhould not be forward to *take offence* on every ſlight occaſion. This argues great weakneſs, and naturally reſults from a high opinion of ourſelves. Such a temper makes a man very uneaſy to himſelf, and has a direct tendency to break the peace of ſociety. *He that is ſlow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his ſpirit, than he that taketh a city.* Prov. xvi. 32.——All evil ſurmiſings, groundleſs ſuſpicions, and raſh cenſures ſhould be avoided, with the greateſt care. If theſe are indulged, peace will ſoon be wounded, if not deſtroyed. *Why doſt thou judge thy brother, or ſet at nought thy brother? We muſt all ſtand before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt. Let us not therefore judge one another any more.* Rom. xiv. 10,—13.——There ſhould be a readineſs to reprove one another, to confeſs our faults one to another, and exerciſe a ſpirit of forgiveneſs. Reproof ſhould be faithfully given, and thankfully received. To deſpiſe reproof, is brutiſh, and occaſions great pain and diſtreſs to thoſe who are concerned for peace and holineſs. We ſhould rather ſay, *Let the righteous*

righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs. And we ſhould be ready to *confeſs our faults*, and not conceal, or ſtrive to extenuate them, much leſs to juſtify ourſelves when in the wrong; that would certainly ſtrike at the root of peace. *Confeſs your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.* Jam. v. 16. A ſpirit of forgiveneſs is likewiſe exceedingly neceſſary. There can be no living in peace without it. Nor have we reaſon to believe ourſelves forgiven of God, if we are not ready to forgive one another. Mat. vi. 14, 15. What a powerful argument does this apoſtle uſe to engage to this; when he ſays, *Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven you.* —For the ſame purpoſe, there ſhould be great prudence uſed in the management of the temporal affairs of the church. In contributing towards the ſupport of the Redeemer's intereſt, and the relief of the poor, every one ought to lay out according to his ability. That there *may be an equality*, and one be not *eaſed, and another burdened.* 2 Cor. viii. 14. The rich ſhould not give according to the rate of the poor; but every one according *as God has proſpered him.* The Deacons ſhould faithfully diſcharge their office,

fice, and be able to give a good account to the church, of their ſtewardſhip. 1 Tim. iii. 13.—Theſe are ſome of the things which make for the peace of chriſtian ſociety, and without a due attention to which, a church cannot live in peace.——We paſs on to

III. The precious promiſe made to thoſe, who are enabled to conform to the advice given; *The God of love and peace ſhall be with you.*

The all-ſeeing God, as the God of providence, is with all men. And as the *God of all grace*, he is *ever* with his people, while in this world. But there is ſomething peculiarly emphatical in theſe words, the God of LOVE and PEACE *ſhall be with you*. He hath ſaid, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.** And this word ſhall ſtand faſt to a thouſand generations. Yet this is perfectly conſiſtent with the ſuſpenſion of divine comforts, on account of what is diſpleaſing to God, in the temper or walk of his people. For the preſence and ſmile of the God of *love and peace*, are only promiſed to thoſe who duly attend to the charge given in the text.

He

* Heb. xiii. 5.

He is ſtiled the God of love and peace, with the greateſt propriety, becauſe both theſe center in him. *God is love.* * The lengths and breadths, the depths and heights of love, are with, and in him. He is alſo ſtiled, *the God of peace*; yea, the VERY *God of peace.*§ Love and peace have been manifeſted, in our election, redemption, and juſtification. And will farther appear, in our ſanctification and complete ſalvation. Theſe bleſſings are all of God: aud the fruits of that love, and thoſe thoughts of peace he had towards us. He loved us, and therefore *gave his ſon* to die for us; Jeſus loved us, and *waſhed us from our ſins, in his own blood.*†

He is the author of love and peace in the hearts of his ſaints. He *circumciſeth the heart* to love him. He *ſheds abroad his love in our hearts*, by the Holy Ghoſt. The dear Redeemer has *left his peace with his people*, as a legacy; and *given* it *to them*, as a portion. His peace *paſſeth underſtanding*, and it *keeps* and *rules the heart.*

Moreover, the Lord requires love and peace of his people, and diſcovers his approbation

* 1 Joh. iv. 2. Eph. iii. 18. § Rom. xvi. 20.
† Joh. iii. 16. Rev. i. 5.

bation of them, where they are found. As they are good and pleaſant in themſelves, ſo they are acceptable in his ſight.* Now, this God of love and peace *ſhall be with you.* The meaning of this promiſe ſeems to be given, in the apoſtolic benediction below. *The grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all.*

1. The God of love and peace ſhall be with you, to counſel and direct you in the way of truth and righteouſneſs. Ye *know but in part.* Ye *ſee* but as *thro' a glaſs, darkly.* You are often crying, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wond'rous things out of thy law.* In anſwer to this, the God of love and peace ſhall be with you, to guide and keep you in the truth. Chriſt is the anointed prophet of his church; the inſpired volume is put into your hands; and the goſpel of the grace of God is preached to you. You hear the *voice behind you, ſaying, This is the way, walk ye in it.* Hence, *the path of the juſt, like a ſhining light, ſhineth more and more to the perfect day.*§

2. The

* 1 Joh. iii. 23, and iv. 21. § Pſ. cxix. 18. Iſ. xlv. 13.

2. The God of love and peace ſhall be with you, for your protection and defence. You are in the midſt of enemies; like ſheep among wolves; beſet on every ſide. The powers of darkneſs encompaſs you round.* But *the eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are his everlaſting arms.* He covers you from danger, with *his feathers, his wings,* as a hen protects her callow brood; his *truth is your ſhield and buckler.* He is a *wall of fire round about you*; and the glory in the midſt of you. As the *hills ſtand round about Jeruſalem, ſo the Lord ſtandeth round about his people,* from *henceforth, even for ever.* So that the church may boldly ſay, *The Lord of hoſts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge. We ſhall be more than conquerors, thro' him that loveth us.*§

3. The God of love and peace ſhall be with you, in a way of fellowſhip and communion. He has, in every age, indulged his people with nearneſs to himſelf in his ordinances. He *meeteth him that rejoiceth and worketh righteouſneſs.*† He *looketh forth as the morning* on ſuch as worſhip him in ſpirit and

*Pſ. lvii. 4. § Deut. xxxiii. 27. Zech. ii. 5. Pſ. cxxv. 2.
† Iſ. lxiv. 5.

and truth; he brings them to his *banqueting-houſe*; and ſpreads the *banner of his love* over them. He cauſeth them to *ſit under his ſhadow, with great delight*, and pluck the *fruits* of the tree of life, which are divinely *ſweet to the taſte*. They *pour out* their *hearts before him*, tell him their joys and ſorrows, their fears and complaints, their burdens and reliefs. And the *ſecret of the Lord* being *with them*, he *ſhews them his covenant*; unfolds unto them the *ſure mercies of David*; and they are encouraged to ſay, This covenant *contains all my ſalvation, and all my deſire*. The King *ſits* with them *at his table*; he *comes into his garden, and eats his pleaſant fruits*. He *manifeſts himſelf* to them *as he does not to the world*. So that when the promiſe in our text is accompliſhed, the children of God can ſay, *Truly*; however aſtoniſhing it may ſeem, it is a real fact;—*truly, our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son, Jeſus Chriſt*.*

4. The God of love and peace ſhall be with you, to rule and govern you. It is the glory and felicity of the church, that *the Lord reigns* in the midſt of her: That he ſways his ſceptre there; makes *his people willing, in*

* Pſ. xxv. 14. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Cant. i. 12, &c. 1 Jo. i. 3.

in the day of his power; and brings them to acknowledge themſelves his loyal ſubjects: That he *puts* his *laws into their inward parts*, and *writes them in their hearts*. Hence they chearfully ſubmit to his authority.*

5. The God of love and peace ſhall be with you, to beſtow a conſtant ſucceſſion of gifts for edification. Gifts for private and public uſefulneſs, are from God. *Every good and every perfect gift cometh from the Father of lights*. The *ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, he has promiſed*. The *ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt, is his gift*. It is the happineſs of the church of God to *be filled with all knowledge*, and that the members thereof, be *able to admoniſh one another*. Miniſterial gifts are from God. If one miniſter die, the Lord can raiſe up another. If *Moſes* muſt be called home, there is a beloved *Joſhua* ready to ſucceed him. If *Elijah* mounts the fiery car, and ſoars up to the regions of bliſs, a double portion of his ſpirit falls upon *Eliſha*.—You have loſt a prophet of the Lord; but the God of love and peace will be with you, and ſend you another, I

* Iſ. xxxiii. 22.

truſt he will. May he alſo be *a paſtor after God's own heart.**

6. The God of love and peace will be with you, to *bleſs the proviſions of his houſe.* It is the preſence and bleſſing of God, that render the ordinances pleaſant, and profitable to the ſouls of the faithful. There is a *feaſt of fat things, in the mount of the Lord.* There are *green paſtures,* where the ſheep of Chriſt *lie down.* We read of the *fatneſs of God's houſe*; the *river of his pleaſures*; and the abundant ſatisfaction of the ſaints therewith. But the reaſon is, the God of love and peace dwells there, and abundantly bleſſes the proviſion of his houſe. This being the caſe, the church is plentifully refreſhed with *the river of God,* which is full of water. The *father of mercies, and God of all comfort, fills* his ſaints *with all joy and peace in believing*; extends *peace* to them *like a river, and righteouſneſs as the waves of the ſea*; ſo that their heart becomes *like a watered garden.* And by the word and ordinances, the *whole body, by joints and bands, having nouriſhment miniſtred, and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God.*§

Moreover,

* Jam. i. 17. Zech. xii. 10. Eph. i. 17. Rom. xv. 14.

§ Pſ. xxiii. 2. and xxxvi. 8. and cxxxii. 14, 15. Col. ii. 19.

Moreover, by the bleſſing of God on the means, ſinners are convinced and turned to the Lord. The divine word is directed, like an *arrow to the hearts* of God's *enemies*; it becomes *the power of God to ſalvation*; and *turns ſinners from darkneſs to light*; and ſo is inſtrumental, in increaſing the church *with men like a flock*. But then, all this is owing to *the arm of the Lord* being *revealed*, and his preſence granted to his church.*

In a word, the accompliſhment of this promiſe is the church's glory. The preſence of a wiſe and judicious prince is the glory of a ſtate; how much more honour then, muſt the preſence of the LORD, put upon his people. This makes them, *beautiful as Tirza, comely as Jeruſalem, and terrible as an army with banners.* Cant. vi. 4.

Now, the certainty of the Lord's dwelling with his people, as above, may be concluded, from his love to them. He *loveth the gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob.* The church is ſaid to be his *reſt*, and his *portion*, where he *will dwell.*——In that *everlaſting covenant*, which is ordered in all things

* Act. ii. 41. Iſa. liii. 1.

and ſure, he has engaged, not to *turn away from his people, to do them good*; and he has promiſed, to *put his fear in their hearts*, that they may *not depart from him*. Jer. xxxii. 40. Of this covenant, the Lord *hath ever been mindful*; he will not *break it*, nor *alter the thing* that is gone out of his mouth.

— The relation ſubſiſting between God and his church, is cloſe and laſting; and from this we may conclude on the certainty of his preſence with her. He is the *head*, and his church the *body*: he is the *huſband*, and they the *ſpouſe*; he is their *Father*, and they his *children*: he is their *Sovereign*, and they his *ſubjects*; he is their *Shepherd*, and they his *flock*; he is their *Maſter*, and they his *ſcholars*. The huſband dwells with his ſpouſe, the father with his children, the ſovereign with his ſubjects, the ſhepherd with his flock, and the maſter with his ſcholars. So, *the God of love and peace ſhall be with you.**

— This is no more than what he has given you the firmeſt aſſurance of, by promiſe. *In all places where I record my name, I will come to thee, and I will bleſs thee.* Exod. xx. 24. Our

* Col. i. 18. Rev. xxi. 9. Jer. iii. 19. Iſa. xxxiii. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 25. If. liv. 13.

Our adorable Redeemer, has repeated, and confirmed this promiſe to his people, under the preſent diſpenſation. Mat. viii. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together, in my name, there am I in the midſt of them.* And he that has made theſe promiſes, is *not a man, that he ſhould lie, nor the Son of man, that he ſhould repent: hath he ſaid it, and ſhall he not do it? hath he ſpoken it, and ſhall he not make it good?**

If any object, that in many places where there were once flouriſhing churches, the glory is now departed, and ſcarcely the form of godlineſs remains: I would obſerve; that this is but a confirmation of the truth under conſideration: *Be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace ſhall be with you.* We have ſeen above, that there is a ſenſe in which he will *never leave nor forſake his people.* And there is alſo a ſenſe in which he *will not be with them,* when they walk contrary to the rules of his word. i. e. He will not *then* be with them, *as the God of love and peace,* to afford them his gracious ſmiles. If they ſink into lukewarmneſs, or impurity; no wonder, if their church-ſtate is over-

* Num. xxiii. 19.

thrown; they ſcattered here and there; and the *candleſtick removed out of its place.* No wonder, if their *wood, hay and ſtubble are burnt up*; but the true ſaint ſhall ſtill *be recovered and ſaved, yet ſo as by fire.* All this ſhews the Lord's juſt abhorrence of ſin, and vindicates the faithfulneſs of his word.

The records of all ages prove, that the ruin of a goſpel church-ſtate, hath ever enſued on the lukewarmneſs, contentions, and other diſorders of nominal chriſtians. Witneſs the overthrow of the churches in *Aſia*, and other parts of the *Eaſtern* world. *Let God be true tho' every man be found a liar.* His promiſe is ſure. Nor can an inſtance be produced of a church being diſſolved, while God was in the midſt of her; or of the Lord's departing from a people whoſe works were upright before him.*

Thus, my dear brethren, I have attempted an improvement of this precious portion of God's word, recommended to me for that purpoſe, by your late worthy paſtor.

Suffer me to ſubjoin a few remarks by way of uſe. 1. Hence

* *Wallin* on the text.

1. Hence learn, the happy connection there is between duty and privilege; between practical godlineſs and the comforts of chriſtianity. It is in vain to expect the latter ſeparate from the former. Thoſe who walk in *the darkneſs* of impurity, can have *no fellowſhip with* the God of light. None can enjoy his gracious preſence but ſuch as are conformed to his will, and obſerve his ordinances and commands. He dwells with none, as the God of love and peace, but ſuch as love, reverence and obey his laws, put on his yoke, learn of him, copy after his example, and *follow the Lamb whitherſoevar he goeth. In keeping his commandments, there is great reward.* The Lord never deſerts his church in general, nor believers in particular, while they walk conſcientiouſly before him. *Your iniquities ſeparate between you and your God, and your ſins hide his face, that he will not hear.* The reaſon why the church's Bridegroom abſented himſelf from her, as repreſented in the Song of *Solomon*, was her negligence, and ſinking into a carnal ſlumber, upon her bed of eaſe. Nor did he manifeſt himſelf to her, till ſhe was rouzed from her ſecurity, and went forth into the *ſtreets, the lanes, and broad ways of the city, to ſeek him whom her ſoul loved.*

2. Muſt

2. Muſt goſpel miniſters die, as well as others, and bid a final farewell to their dear people! How ſhould this conſideration ſerve to quicken their diligence in their great Maſter's work? May I, may my dear fellow-labourers in the Lord's vineyard, improve our time and talents in the beſt manner we are able, for the good of mankind at large; but eſpecially, of the particular flocks committed to our care! The truths of God, and the ſouls of men, are, in ſome ſort, committed to our truſt. It is an awful and ſolemn charge. There is none in this world equal to it. How ought we to *labour in the word and doctrine!* To be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon; to keep back nothing that may be profitable to the ſouls of men! What fervor, what zeal, what painfulneſs, what fortitude and patience, are needful to be exerciſed and exerted here! And, *who is ſufficient for theſe things?* May we *obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful!* The ſeaſon allotted us will quickly be over; our ſtrength will be weakened by the way; our tongues forget to move; and our lips be ſealed in perpetual ſilence. Shortly the Judge of all will ſay to us, *Give an account of thy ſtewardſhip, for thou mayeſt be no longer ſteward.* O may we acquit ourſelves

ſelves in this great work, with wiſdom, fidelity and affection in the fear of God; that we may *be pure from the blood of all men!* How awful will it be in the day of accounts, if the blood of any ſhould *be required at our hands!* And, on the other hand, how happy to hear the God of heaven and earth, ſay, *Well done, good and faithful ſervant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!*

3. Let the churches learn to prize, and profit by, their miniſters while they live. *Your fathers, where are they, and the prophets, do they live for ever?* No! They die like other men. Be their lives ever ſo precious, their numbers ever ſo ſmall, or their labours ever ſo extenſively uſeful; yet they muſt *go the way of all the earth.* This ſhould remind thoſe among whom they labour, not to deſpiſe them on the one hand, nor idolize them on the other. There is a medium between the two extremes. As the ſervants and meſſengers of the Moſt High, they are entitled to ſome regard, eſpecially when they make full proof of their miniſtry, and ſhew a willingneſs to *ſpend and be ſpent*, for the good of immortal ſouls. This reſpect ſhould be ſhewn, in a conſtant attendance on their pub-

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lic labours; a chearful reception of their wholeſome inſtructions and godly advice; a concern and endeavour to make them eaſy; a diſpoſition of mind to ſympathize with them in all their afflictions, and remember them affectionately at the throne of grace. What our gracious Redeemer ſaid to his diſciples, deſerves due attention. Luke x. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me.*

4. Tho' the church's miniſters die, yet the Lord liveth. Miniſters muſt take their leave of, and bid a final farewell to, their dear people, in whoſe happineſs their lives were bound up; but the living God dwelleth with his ſaints, and ſhall be in them. He will *never leave them nor forſake them.* If he *hides his face,* it is but *for a moment.* To chear their drooping hearts, he ſays, *Fear thou not, for I am with thee. A woman may forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb; yet will I not forget thee. Comfort one another, brethren, with theſe words,* in your preſent circumſtances.

5. Let us keep the parting hour in view, when we muſt bid a final farewell to all below,

low. The time of our departure is near at hand. Shortly we muſt put off this tabernacle. We too are going the way of all the earth, and ſhall ſoon reach *the houſe appointed for all living*. May we be divinely taught, to *number our days*, and *apply our hearts unto wiſdom!* And may we be looking forward to the happy, happy day, when paſtors and churches ſhall meet together at the right hand of God in glory! What a bleſſed aſſembly will that be! When we ſhall ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, at the marriage ſupper of the Lamb; and the churches of Chriſt be the joy and crown of their miniſters for ever. 1 Theſ. ii. 19, 20. Here we live ſeparate, and at a painful diſtance from many whom we love in the truth, and for the truth's ſake which dwelleth in them; but there will be no ſuch obſtruction to our communion in the heavenly world. We ſhall bid farewell no more; but ſhall be *caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and ſo ſhall we be ever with the Lord.*

Yet I greatly fear this will not be the caſe with all here preſent. Are not many of you yet in your ſins, unrepented of, and as ſuch, unpardoned? How often have you been warned

warned of your danger, with plainneſs, faithfulneſs and affection, by our deceaſed brother! Your ſtate, as ſinners, has been laid before you; the evil nature of ſin ſet forth in a ſtriking light; and the awful conſequences of continuing in a ſtate of impenitence clearly pointed out. The only remedy which infinite mercy has provided, has been fully made known. You have been *warned to flee from the wrath to come*; and *perſuaded*, by the *terrors of the Lord*, to leave your ſins, conſider your latter end, and enquire after the *one thing needful*. Yet you have been deaf to all his counſel, and deſpiſed all his reproof. You now hear the voice, you ſee the face of this ſervant of God no more! How awful for you, if he ſhould be a ſwift witneſs againſt you in the great and terrible day of the Lord! You diſregarded his labours of love, while living; O that you might recollect, and profit by them, now he is dead!

What ſhall I more ſay on this mournful occaſion?—There is in this numerous aſſembly, the diſconſolate widow of our deceaſed friend; who moſt ſenſibly feels the weight of this providential ſtroke. Your loſs is truly great. Your preſent circumſtances demand

mand our pity and chriſtian ſympathy. The painful feelings of your mind cannot well be deſcribed. The breach which death has made is irreparable. Yet be not ſwollowed up of overmuch ſorrow. Look forward to the heavenly world, where your dear companion is now at reſt, and waiting for your arrival. Your age, and many infirmities and afflictions, forbid *us* to hope, and *you* to fear, that your ſtay will be long behind him in this wilderneſs. And remember, farther, that tho' your earthly huſband is dead, your *Maker is your huſband*, and he *liveth for evermore*; he will take care of, and provide for, you. No doubt, the dear man who is now taken from you, did, while living, in the moſt affectionate manner, often recommend you to the care of him who hath ſaid, *Let thy widows truſt in me*. Jer. xlix. 2.

A word more to you who conſtitute the church of God in this place, and I will draw to a cloſe. We ſympathize with you in your preſent circumſtances. You have loſt a friend indeed. I hope you have many friends yet alive. Yet, I know not where you will find one equal to him who is dead. His time, his ſtrength, his life were ſpent in the ſervice

vice of God for your good. He ſcarcely thought any thing too much he could do for you, and was always content and eaſy with what he received from you. The good of your ſouls, and the glory of God, in the advancement of the Redeemer's intereſt among you, were the objects he kept in view. His pious and prudent behaviour in civil and ſocial life, you have known for many years. Whatever trials or diſcouragements he met with, ſuch was his regard for you, as determined him to abide by you, and live and die amongſt you. Were any of you in a backſliding ſtate? What pains did he take for your recovery? How forcible were his words, and how penetrating his addreſs, to perſons in theſe circumſtances!

Nor was his concern for your welfare at all abated, but rather increaſed, in the courſe of his laſt illneſs. An inſtance of which I have from his own hand, in the laſt letter I received from him, which, at his deſire, I laid before you in public, on the day of his interment. Part of which I beg leave here to repeat, that in future days you may recollect the workings of his heart toward you, and the earneſt deſire he had to the laſt, for your

advancement

advancement in holineſs, your continued peace and proſperity.

"I could wiſh you," ſays he, "to addreſs the church in a cloſe and affectionate exhortation; directing them how to behave themſelves in their families; their cloſets; their monthly meetings for prayer; the public worſhip of God; and in their whole conduct, both to one another, and to all men."

Theſe are the very words of your dying miniſter, which I hope you will never forget. I have often heard him expreſs much ſatisfaction of mind, in your ſtability in the doctrines of the goſpel, your peaceable diſpoſition; your readineſs to comply with the order and diſcipline of the houſe of God, to fill up your places, to ſupport the intereſt of Chriſt, and the like. Theſe things, together with your being the ſeals of his miniſtry, and the children which God had graciouſly given him, rendered you dear to him. You will, I hope, give further proof, that the good opinion he had of you was well founded. *Remember him who has had the rule over you,* who has *ſpoken unto you the word of God: whoſe faith follow, conſidering the end of his*

his converſation: Jeſus Chriſt, the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever. Then may you reſt aſſured, that the God of love and peace ſhall be with you.

I ſhall cloſe with the following memoir.

Mr *James Hartley* was born in the month of *March*, 1722. His parents being but low in the world, he had not the advantages of a liberal education, to brighten and improve his good natural abilities. I have heard of nothing remarkable in the firſt twenty years of his life, excepting ſome traces of ingenuity and good ſenſe, which he then gave proofs of, on various occaſions. But about the year 1744, the gracious Redeemer, who had marked him for his own, and ſet him apart, as a *choſen veſſel to bear his name before the Gentiles*, arreſted his conſcience, and brought him under deep conviction of the ſinfulneſs of his heart and life. He was, for ſome time, a hearer of that zealous and indefatigable ſervant of Chriſt, the late Rev. Mr *Grimſhaw*, of *Haworth*; whoſe preaching was greatly owned for the converſion of ſouls. Yet, I believe, our deceaſed brother, had the greateſt advantage, under God, from the miniſterial labours

labours of that pious and ſteady man, whoſe character he has ſo juſtly repreſented, in the beginning of his *Trial of the two Opinions, try'd.* I mean, the late Mr *Richard Smith*, of *Wainſgate.* Under the miniſtrations of this good man, Mr *Hartley* was led into, and eſtabliſhed in, the truth as it is in Jeſus. Being throughly convinced that it was his duty to *follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth*, he ſubmitted to the ordinance of chriſtian baptiſm by immerſion, as he was well perſuaded, that this is the *one baptiſm* inſtituted by the great head of the church. He for ſome time ſtood a member of the church at *Wainſgate*. But ſuch gifts and grace were beſtowed on him, and he made ſuch progreſs in divine knowledge, that his judicious friends ſoon perceived him deſigned for public uſefulneſs.

About the year 1748, Mr. *Hartley* began to exerciſe his talents in a miniſterial way, to the ſatisfaction and ſpiritual advantage of many. He was an exception to the general rule, that *a prophet hath not honour in his own country, and among his own kin.* The Lord made him the inſtrument of raiſing, and gathering the church, of which he was after-

paſtor to his dying day. This church was ſettled, and he ordained over it, *June* 12, 1752. He ſtudied the ſacred ſcriptures with great cloſeneſs, which *are able to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furniſhed to all good works.* His method of handling divine ſubjects, was clear and natural; his reaſoning nervous and manly; and his ideas were clothed with *ſound ſpeech, which could not be condemned.* His natural turn was ſedate and thoughtful. He never diſappointed his hearers, with crude and indigeſted harangues. He ſtudied, by the *words of truth and ſoberneſs*, to inform the judgment, rouze the conſcience, and lead the ſoul to God and holineſs. Thoſe that heard him with attention, could ſcarcely forbear exclaiming, *How forcible are right words!* His diſpoſition was open and communicative; and as he was of a candid and peaceable temper himſelf, ſo he had a talent for compoſing differences among contending parties, which was much admired. In this kind of work he was often employed, in the neighbouring churches; and he had ſuch a method of reaſoning perſons out of their prejudices, that he very often ſucceeded. On all theſe accounts, his uſefulneſs was very extenſive, both at home and abroad.

But

But the *earthen veſſel* had long been going to decay, and is now daſhed to pieces. Mr. *Hartley* was afflicted with an *aſthma* for many years. But this diſorder ſeemed to have entirely left him, for ſome time before his death. Laſt ſummer, he had a ſlight ſtroke of the palſy. This was followed, with all the ſymptoms of a decline. Theſe increaſing more and more, he was fully perſuaded, that he was *going the way of all the earth.* But this did not at all diſcompoſe his mind. His only fear was, that his diſorder would be tedious, and himſelf become burdenſome to the people; as he was now incapable of public exerciſe. In a letter, bearing date, Aug. 18, 1779, he writes thus;

"I ſay little, unleſs I am put to it. But think within myſelf, there is no apparent probability of my recovery. Sometimes, death would look a little gloomy; but in the general, am not diſcouraged at the proſpect of it. Sometimes I long to ſpeak to the people again; at other times, am pretty willing to reſign. Sometimes diſtreſſing thoughts for the intereſt here, will needs crowd upon my mind; and then, again, I think, I ought to leave it with him, who is infinitely more careful of it, than I am, or ever was."

Such were the workings of his mind, under the languiſhments of declining nature. He lived ſweetly on thoſe evangelical truths, which he had faithfully preached to others. As his diſorder prevailed, his confidence in God, and hope in Chriſt, increaſed. He was quite compoſed in the views of death, and ſometimes filled with the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt. He could not bear any to expreſs their deſire for his recovery, or even to pray for it. I having one evening preached to the people, upon my return into the houſe, he ſaid, he hoped we had not been praying for his recovery. I told him, we had not; with which he ſeemed much pleaſed. Being a little more chearful than uſual at one time, his affectionate wife expreſſed her hope that he might yet recover. He, with ſome degree of warmth, replied to this effect, "That he would not recover for ten thouſand worlds; it is cruel," ſays he, "to deſire it. But I am perſuaded, God will not inflict ſo great a puniſhment upon me." He was reduced to ſo weak a ſtate, that for ſome weeks he could ſcarcely bear to ſpeak. Till at laſt the glimmering lamp of life was extinguiſhed, *Feb.* 2, 1780, in the 58th year of his age. The church's loſs is great, but his gain is greater. May we all *be followers of them, who thro' faith and patience now inherit the promiſes!* AMEN!

BRITISH MUSEUM

EPITAPHIUM.

FAR from affliction, toil and care,
The happy ſoul is fled;
The breathleſs clay ſhall ſlumber here,
Amongſt the ſilent dead.

Slowly his earthly frame decay'd,
His end was long in ſight;
Nor was his ſteady ſoul afraid
To take her awful flight.

The goſpel was his joy and ſong,
E'en to his lateſt breath;
The truths he had maintain'd ſo long
Were his ſupport in death.

Now he reſides where Jeſus is,
Above this duſky ſphere;
He was no ſtranger to the bliſs,
While he ſojourned here.

His

His body reſts beneath the ground,
Till that tremendous day,
When the laſt trump ſhall give the ſound
To rouze his ſleeping clay.

The church's loſs we all deplore,
And ſhed the falling tear;
We ſhall behold his face no more,
Till Jeſus ſhall appear.

But we are haſt'ning to the tomb;
O may we ready ſtand!
Then, deareſt Lord, receive us home,
To dwell at thy right hand.

F I N I S.

P. S.—In 1755. Mr. *Hartley* publiſhed, *The Head-ſtone brought forth*, A SERMON, occaſioned by the Death of Mr. *Joſeph Greenwood*.

In 1767. *The Trial of the Two Opinions* tried, &c.

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